A COMMENTARY ON THE CANTICLES OR THE SONG of SOLOMON.

Wherein the text is Analized, the Native signification of the Words Declared, the Allegories Explained, and the Order of times whereunto they relate, Observed.

By THOMAS BRIGHTMAN.

Vnto which is added brief notes out of severall Expositors of the *Revelation*, touching the rising and fall, progresse and finall destruction of the Enemies of the Church; with some other Observances out of divers Writers.

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A

To the Reader.

THat which the Queen of *Sheba* once affirmed before *Salomon*, is very true; *The Instruments of Gods blessings are the arguments of his love:* 1 *King.* 10. 9. whence it is apparent that God did wonderfully declare his tender love to the Church upon earth, in continually raising famous men, who like burning lights in golden Candlesticks, did shine forth to the honour and glory of his Sanctuary. And as no age (since the Apostles time) hath been so glorious for the light of truth, and the abundance of lights as the present; so I hope (without prejudice to any) our *Brightman* of blessed memory, for names sake, may deservedly finde a place among those that were most famous in this kinde; for truly whilst he lived he was, as Christ said of *John Baptist, A burning and a shining light.* He was famous in Preaching, and for his conversation making himselfe an example to the Church, by practising what he Preached, living according to the rule of his Doctrine. Yea, and that which is wonderfull, this light of ours being extinct, still shines brightly; for what else is his *Apocalyps* of the *Apocalyps*, but a *Light shining in darke places?* for surely so mysterious is that parcell of Scripture, that it is not to be interpreted by wit, but by the Spirit of Divination. But our *Bright-man* hath made such plain interpretation thereof, that thou mayest easily behold the great mystery of Iniquity of the Beast of *Rome*, as also Gods great mercy in calling the Jews. And although many learned men have (to their glory) spent their whole time in the interpreting this part of Scripture; yet this our Author hath interpreted this and other most difficult places; witnesse the Song of *Solomon* and the latter part of the Prophecy of *Daniel.* Concerning the Song of *Solomon*, the Law of the Jewes is very well known, by which young men under the age of thirty (before which time they did not enter into the Priesthood) were interdicted to read it, lest those things which were mystically set forth, should by the swaying of their passions, be enterpreted in the worst sense. But our *Brightman* amongst others that have deserved well in this also, expresses every word spiritually, whereby thou mayest receive Divine and heavenly pleasures. All things are expounded with great labour, and applyed with great Judgement; insomuch, that in this new path, you may walk in the footsteps of the Spouse, *Jesus Christ*: or as the Jews call it, enter the *Sanctum Sanctorum.*

The Manner of his handling this Scripture, especially in the application, is universall; for he held this prophecy to be wonderfully difficult, whence it is no marvell, if some doubt whether he did attaine to the genuine interpretation of

[illegible] because the difficulty of the Allegory hath occasioned such variance [illegible] Interpreters, that it may almost be said; as many men, so many [illegible]; I hope it will not be distastefull to the Church of Christ, that the labours of this her godly sonne are published in Print, whereby the Reader may perceive the Anthors great knowledge in this mystery: he doth acknowledge a marriage between Christ and his Church; but in this he differs from the rest of the Interpreters, that what they conclude to be alwayes, he restrains to certain times. I confesse, he that forsakes the ancient opinions of learned and godly men, and propounds to himself a new way, in which he walketh all alone, may (in good manners) be thought to erre; but because sometimes he that readeth understandeth that, which the Prophets themselves which Prophesied, it did not know; and because our *Brightman*, for his singular meeknesse, humility, and godlinesse, was thought by them, amongst whom he lived, and had to do, to be free from all manner of affectation of Novelty; as also because he is not singular in his manner of interpreting: for amongst the *Hebrewes*, *Aben Ezra* conceives the mystery from *Abraham* to the Messias to be here set forth; And some amongst us, from the Messias to the Churches freedome under *Constantine*: And in this they all agree, that some things are particularly to be applied. And lastly, because our Author doth not desire credence in any thing, but where it may be grounded upon a sure foundation, therefore *feare not, try all things; and hold fast that which is good; The spirits of the Prophets are subject to the Prophets.* 1 *Thes.* 21. 1 *Cor.* 14. 33.

But admit this Propheticall and particular application doth not please you, yet to behold the whole condition of the Church from the time of *David*, till time shall bee no more; and this set forth in a short and easie table, cannot choose but be both profitable and delightfull unto thee.

Reader, I thought good to premise these things for thy sake, and for the Authors praise; (at which I chiefly aim) much more might be spoken, but read the Author, who in the Explication of the first verse, doth by way of Proeme, admirably set forth the authority, excellency, and use of this Song of Songs.

By the way, I pray take this caution, if you once enter the Portall, come not back untill you have surveyed the whole building, the curiosity of whose structure, surpasses my expression.

Let God so shine upon us with the light of his Countenance, that there may alwayes be a *Brightman* in Britaine, to the setting forth of the glory of God in his Sonne Jesus Christ: Farewell.

A Table of the whole book of CANTICLES.

THe part of the Song. 1 Inscription, v. 1. 2 A song of the Church. 1 Legall, Before the Captiwity. v. 1. In Captivity, cap. 2. to v. 15. After to Christ, his birth to cap. 3. 6. his death to cap. 4. 6. 2 Evangelicall 1 Begun at cap. 6. 2 Finished, and this, In its parts, that is, in its 1 Former age, pure, obscure, with a mist, with darknesse, cap. 5. restored at cap. 6. 9. 2 Latter Age, its Prince, borne, grown up. Infelicities first, cap. 8. 5, 6, 7. second, cap. 8. 8, 9, 10. In the whole, cap. 8. 11, 12, 13, 14.

A Propheticall Expoſition of the whole Book of the CANTICLES.

CHAP. I.

1 LEt him kiſſe mee with the kiſſes of his mouth: for thy love is better than wine.

2 Becauſe of the ſavour of thy good oyntments, thy name *is as* an oyntment powred out: therefore the virgins love thee.

3 Draw me, we will run after thee: the king hath brought me into his chambers: we will rejoyce and be glad in thee: we will remember thy love more than wine; the righteous do love thee

4 I am black, O daughters of Jeruſalem, but comely, as the tents of Kedar, *and* as the curtains of Salomon.

5 Regard ye me not becauſe I am black: for the ſun hath looked upon me. The ſons of my mother were angry againſt me: they made me the keeper of the vines: but I kept not mine own vine.

6 Shew me, *O thou* whom my ſoule loveth, where thou feedeſt, where thou lyeſt at noone: for why ſhould I be as ſhe that turneth aſide to the flockes of thy companions?

7 If thou know not, O thou the faireſt among women, get thee forth by the ſteps of the flock, and feed thy kids by the tents of the ſhepherds.

8 I have compared thee, O my love, to the troop of Horſes in the chariots of Pharaoh.

9 Thy cheeks are comely with rowes of ſtones, and thy neck with chaines.

10 Wee will make thee borders of gold with ſtuds of ſilver.

11 Whiles the king was at his repaſt, my ſpikenard gave the ſmell thereof.

12 My welbeloved *is as* a bundle of myrrhe unto me: he ſhall lye between my breaſts.

13 My welbeloved *is as* a cluſter of camphire unto me, in the vines of Engedi.

14 My love, behold, thou art faire, behold, thou art faire: thine eyes *are like* the doves.

15 My welbeloved, behold, thou art faire and pleaſant: alſo our bed is green:

16 The beames of our houſe *are* cedars, our rafters *are* of Firre.

A PRAYER.

O Mercifull Father in Jeſus Chriſt, I beſeech thee beſtow thy holy Spirit for a guide unto me, to ſearch out theſe thy hidden Myſteries. All the knowledge of thy truth is exceeding delightfull and pleaſant: yea that which ſtands before the door, and offereth it ſelf freely to every one: how delicious then is that which thou haſt laid up in the inward treaſuries, ſhut up with ſo many locks and bolts, that no mortall man can break through unto it, but he to whom thou wilt vouchſafe an entrance for thine onely ſons ſake. Be preſent, I beſeech thee, & thou which haſt powred forth fiery tongues in times paſt upon thy ſervants, grant that I may underſtand the language of the Bridegroome and of the Bride, and may declare their ſpeech purely and holily to thy ſervants; to the glory of thy Name, and the edifying of thine Elect, through our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. *Amen.*

The Analyſis, or Reſolution.

THe Authority of this Song is declared by the Inſcription. Then he proſecuteth his purpoſe in verſe, 4 *which is wholy imployed in deſcribing the condition of the Church, aſwell as it was legall; from the time of* David, *to the death of Chriſt, in the three firſt* chapters, *and to the* 6 verſe *of the* 4 chapter. *As alſo, as it is Evangelicall unto the ſecond comming of Chriſt to the end of the book. The Legall Church is ſet forth in a divers fortune, which for plainneſſe ſake we divide into* 3 *times. Firſt, what it ſhould be till the Captivity, in the whole firſt Chapter, and the* 2 *firſt* verſes *of the ſecond. Secondly, what in the Captivity it ſelf, to the* 15 verſe *of the ſame Chapter. And laſtly, what it ſhould be afterward to its laſt abrogation or diſſolving, which reacheth*

teth to the 6 verſe of the 4 chapter. Before the Captivity, beginning at his Father David, *he ſheweth what condition that enjoyed under him, verſe 1, 2. afterwards under himſelfe, verſe 3. And from thence what it ſhould be under his ſonne* Rehoboam, *to the 9 verſe: under* Abija *and* Aſa, *verſ. 9, 10, 11. under* Jehoſaphat, *verſ. 12. under* Jehoram, Ahaziah, Joaſh, Amaziah, Huziah, Jotham, *and* Ahaz, *verſe 13. under* Hezechiah, *verſe 14. under* Manaſſes *and* Joſias, *ver. 15 and 16.*

THE EXPOSITION.

Verſ. 1. *Let him kiſſe me with the kiſſes of his mouth, for thy love is better then wine.*

THis Propheſie following, agreeth well neer in all things with that of Saint *Iohn* in the *Revelation*. They foreſhew the ſame events in the like times. And either of them directeth his courſe to the ſame mark. They differ ſo much in beginnings, as *Salomon* exceeded *Iohn* in age. They alſo follow ſomewhat, a divers manner of handling it. *Iohn* ſetteth forth the ſtrifes and battells of the Church more at large, and exactly painteth out her enemies with a greater caution, or heed taking. But this Propheticall Paranymph (or marriage maker) toucheth theſe things more ſparingly, deſirous onely to ſet forth the joyfull events of the Church, he ſcarcely mentioneth at all any accidents, whereby this nuptiall ſong might bee diſturbed: or at leaſt, ſo ſeaſoning her troubles, that much pleaſure may alwayes appeare in them.

But firſt let us weigh the words, then let us ſee the Application: Kiſſes are ſometimes taken for faire, milde, and pleaſant words, as chidings and brawlings are compared to wounds, as *Salomon* ſaith, *Prov.* 27. 6. *The wounds of a lover are more faithfull then the flattering kiſſes of an enemy.* The Church then deſireth to be inſtructed with the words of her Bridegroome, which ſhe calleth kiſſes, as the moſt aſſured pledges of the Bridegroomes love; neither can any thing be compared with this love; therefore ſhe preferreth it before wine, which is chiefely eſteemed among thoſe things which taſte moſt peaſantly: for the compariſons of this ſong are taken from ſuch things which doe chiefely tickle up the ſences: becauſe our infirmity is ſuch, that we commonly feele no greater pleaſure in this life, then in thoſe things which pertaine to theſe inferior ſences. This is the ſum: the company of the faithfull do chiefely deſire to be altogether overwhelmed in a moſt familiar converſation with Chriſt, and to bee moſt plentifully inſtructed with the words of his mouth: which they confirme to be the greateſt pleaſure that can be. Now for the Application. *Salomon* beginneth from the Church of his time, and ſheweth the face of it as it was in the Raigne of his father *David*, in this and the next verſe. Chriſt then by the mouth of *David* (bearing his Type) kiſſed the Church, inſtructing it with moſt ſweet *Odes*, *Pſalmes* and *Songs*, wherein that time was moſt excellent above all others. *David* is called the ſweet ſinger of *Iſrael* by the Teſtimony of the Spirit, 2 *Sam.* 23. 1. Whereof the book of *Pſalmes* is a plentifull witneſſe. *Solomon* alſo compoſed 1005. ſongs, but very few of them are recorded in the Sacred Treaſury.

The Prophets, which were many then, and at other times, did chide very often; but not kiſſe: They reproved ſinnes, they thundred out Judgements, they terrified with threatnings: whereas this ſweet ſinger of *Iſrael*, powred out almoſt nothing but prayers, thankſgivings, promiſes, and Exhortations: worthily were theſe the times of kiſſing and imbracing: chiefly, if yee adde all that care and diligence, which he applyed to ordaine the worſhip of God moſt fitly, 1 *Chron.* 23. &c. With theſe kiſſes, which even burned with love of the divine word, and of all piety, the people had then no leſſe deſire to be imbraced (if ever at any time.) *David* rejoyced, when they ſaid unto him, *Let us go into the houſe of the Lord.* And ſeeing the readineſſe of the people, preferring the worſhip of God before all Wine, *Pſal.* 122. 1. The King himſelfe likewiſe in the ſweetneſſe of ſinging (a figure of the Bridegroom,) with diligence and deſire of Religion, (one of the company of the faithfull) did not he deſire one thing of the Lord, *that he might dwell in the houſe of the Lord all the dayes of his life? Pſal.* 27. 4. He manifeſtly confirmeth the Law of the mouth of God, to be better to him, then many thouſands of gold and ſilver. And his judgements to be ſweeter then honey to his mouth, *Pſal.* 119. 72. 103.

Verſ. 2. *Becauſe of the ſavour of thy good ointments, thy name is as ointment poured out, Therefore the virgins love thee.*

Here, with an elegant *Periphraſis*, is ſet forth the conſideration of the name of the Bridegroom, from the effects, whoſe force is weakned by the ſimilitude: For the ſence is, *Thy name is an ointment poured out, very well anſwering to the ſmel of thy ointments. Ointments* ſignifie the gift of the ſpirit: and the ſmell of theſe gifts, is that fruit and ſweetneſſe, which is received by the *Communication* of them. Now whereas the Church publiſheth the ointments of the Bridegroome, it properly pertaineth unto Chriſt, which is a moſt repleniſhed treaſury of the infinitnes of all graces. Yet it is not to be doubted, but here together with Chriſt, *David* his type may alſo be beholden, who being repleniſhed with great abundance of moſt divine graces, breathed out their ſweetneſſe to Gods people which he governed.

He was a man after Gods own heart, by whoſe example the Kings following are commended. He was ordained to be the *anointed of the God of Iacob*, 2 *Sam.* 23. 1. *God anointing him with his holy oyle*, *Pſal.* 89. 21. Neither was it without cauſe, that he was three times *anointed*. Firſt privately by *Samuel*, ſecondly by his own Tribe, thirdly by all *Iſrael*: whereas the other Kings were onely anointed but once. Whence that name is worthily given him, *Pſal.* 2. 2. *The Kings of the earth ſtand up, and the rulers take counſell together, againſt the Lord, and againſt his anointed.* Wherefore, in theſe words *Solomon* declareth the happineſſe of thoſe times, which had a King ſo well furniſhed with all the gifts of the ſpirit.

The virgins are the citizens of the Church, that people of God, which obeyed his government, who therefore loved this King exceedingly, becauſe they ſaw him anointed of God, and enriched with ſuch notable and excellent gifts. The love of the virgins firſt ſhewed it ſelf, when *Saul* perſecuted *David*, Secondly in his two years wars with *Iſhboſheth*, and thirdly in *Abſolons* conſpiracy, when the true citizens divinely ſmelling the *Odour* of the annointed King, could not bee terrified by any dangers, from cleaving to him with a firme minde. So ſhort, but lively, is the image of the Church in *Davids* raigne: Notable in kiſſes: In the figurative *Meſſias*: In the peoples deſire of thoſe kiſſes, and the love of the virgins in the true Subjects, a moſt happy Kingdome wherein theſe foure reigned.

Verſ. 3. *Draw me, we will runne after thee. The King hath brought me into his Chambers: wee will rejoyce and bee glad in thee: we will remember thy love more then wine: the righteous doe love thee.*

In this one little verſe, *Solomon* intreateth of the Church during his ragine, whoſe whole condition is divided into ſixe members.

Firſt, the King drawing by his example, and the ſpirit working together in the faithfull. The firſt authority of his raigne began-

began with the publiſhed meeting at *Gibeon*, 2 *Chron.* 1. 2. Of what force was this attraction? There followed moſt calme peace, ſuch abundance of wealth as no where the like: wiſdom almoſt more then mortall. Glory which amazed all other Kings: and (which exceeded all) a beholding next unto God. Theſe were enough to have drawn the moſt unwilling. But the people folowed willingly: *We will run* (ſay they) *after thee.*

Secondly here is taught, that the people drawn by the Kings example, do flye with a ſwift courſe: He commanded the meeting at *Gibeon*: they flocked thither in great troopes, 1 *Chron.* 1. 13.

Thirdly, the chamber, whereinto the Bride is brought: was that moſt magnificent Temple built by *Solomon*. This houſe is the inner chamber; nay rather the couch and bed (as it is afterward called) wherein the Bridegroom converſeth with the Bride moſt familiarly: whither *Solomon* brought the Church, when for her ſake he built and adorned it ſo beautifully; and eſpecially by drawing the people into the Temple, on the day wherein he dedicated the houſe, going before them with ſacrifices, prayer and thankſgiving, as 1 *Kings.* 8. through the whole chapter.

Fourthly, and fiftly is declared, how joyfull all the people were of thoſe things, ſo happily begun and continued for many years.

Laſtly he ſaid, *the upright love thee.* But why doth he mention the upright, as though there were any in thoſe times whoſe hearts were not ſincere and ſound? verily he ſeemeth by theſe words to paſſe over privily thoſe bleſſed times to a ſorrowfull falling away. We know how grieveouſly *Solomon* fell in the laſt years of his reign, by bringing in ſtrange wives, 1 *King.* 11. His heart was not found towards the Lord, but he followed *Aſhtaroh* and *Milcom*, and built an high place for *Chemoſh* and *Molech*. But did not many of his flattering courtiers run before, whither they ſaw the King ready to decline? But the faithfull and upright in heart, remained firm in the truth, howſoever deſtitute of the Kings authority. Here then we may behold the beginning and middle of his raigne very pleaſant. The King leading, the people following. The Temple built moſt magnificently, the great mirth and rejoycing of all men. But the moſt part in the end were defiled, yet the love of the upright was conſtant, though many fell away to Idolatry.

Verſ. 4. *I am black, but comely (O yee daughters of Ieruſalem) as the Tents of Kedar: as the Curtains of Solomon.*

Having ſpoken before of the flouriſhing eſtate of the Church: now the withering age followeth, which is wholly prophetical, and ſo are all the reſt which follow. Brightneſſe and light are tokens of mirth and gladneſſe, and are ſo uſed in the Scriptures. Black and darkneſſe are applied to griefe and mourning. And truly there hapned mournfull times preſently after *Solomon*, when his ſonne *Rehoboam* by an undiſcreet anſwer, drave ten Tribes from the Church. No marvell then if ſhe mourned in black: a matter ſo full of offence, that it might make the ſtrongeſt to ſtagger, and the weak to fall altogether; wherefore leaſt any ſhould ſplit his ſhip againſt this Rock, the whole rage of that time, is not deſcribed in a word, as before, but in full five verſes. He beginneth at the falling away of the Tribes, where a great alteration hapned, aſwell in the Church as in the Kingdom. The Church affairs are firſt declared briefly in this verſe, afterwards ſeverally in the 6, 7. and 8. verſes. The ſtate of the Kingdome in the 9 verſe. As concerning the briefe explication.

The Church confeſſeth her ſelf made brown and black by the loſſe of her children, and much of her former beauty; The two ſimilitudes in the end ſeem to agre with the two diſtinct members in the beginning of the verſe, *I am black as the Tents of Kedar: but comely as the Curtains of Solomon.* The *Kedarens* are *Arabians*, living in hair-cloth Tents, made of Goats hair. *Solinus, chap.* 45. which they carried with them whither they would. *Plinylib.* 6. *cap.* 28. But the curtains of *Solomon* were ſuch as did not only exceed the *Kedarens* hair-cloth by almoſt infinite degrees, but alſo they had a ſetled abode; whence the Jews figuratively uſed them for every part of the houſe, as with *Ieremiah, chap.* 4. 20. *Suddenly are my Tents ſpoiled, and my curtains in a moment.* This alſo ſheweth that he wrote this ſong after his repentance: for if he had known theſe things before his fall, A prophet needed not to have been ſent to admoniſh him of renting the Kingdome *from him, and giving it to his ſervant*, 1 *Kings* 11. 11.

Verſ. 5. *Look not upon me becauſe I am black, becauſe the ſunne hath looked upon me: my mothers children were angry with me; They made me the keeper of the vineyards: but mine own vineyard have I not kept.*

In this verſe is a ſpeciall deſcription of the two Tribes, as there is of the other, and in the two verſes following. In this verſe in the firſt words, he preventeth the contempt which might be objected; and then ſheweth the cauſes of her calamity. *Look not upon me* (ſaith ſhe) that is to ſay, behold me not diſdainfully; which words do not onely command, but alſo foretell in what eſtimation ſhe ſhould be among her own people. The cauſes are three; firſt the principall: *becauſe the Sun hath looked upon me*, that is, heaven hath inflicted this calamity on me, as God hath threatned it before, 1 *Kings* 11. 11. 30, and 31. And *Rehoboam* regarding not the hand that ſmote him heareth of *Shemaiah, Thus ſaith the Lord, this thing is from me*, 1 *Kings* 12. 24. The wrath of God is here very well deſcribed by the heat of the ſunne.

Secondly, the inſtrumentall cauſe, *My mothers children*, (not only by kindred, but alſo by Religion) being grievouſly offended at me, have broken off their former conjunction with me and conſulting privately by themſelves, are altogether ſeparated from mine acquaintance. See the Hiſtory, 1 *Kings* 12. 16. *&c.* The third cauſe giveth occaſion to the former cauſes, *They made me the keeper of the vineyards, but mine own vineyard have I not kept*, do you ask the cauſe, why God and her brethren were ſo offended? Thus it was. The chiefe authority deferred to the Tribe of *Iuda*, both by Gods decree, and the conſent of their brethren, was ill adminiſtred by her: The Lords vineyard was committed to her to be kept: *For he deſpiſed the tent of Ioſeph, and choſe not the Tribe of Ephraim, but choſe the Tribe of Iuda, even mount Sion whom he loved*, *Pſ.* 78. 67, 68. yet through *Solomons* Idolatry, and defiling Gods worſhip (by the juſt judgement of God) the other Tribes were offended at *Iuda*, and by ſeparating themſelves made the Church deformed and polluted.

Verſ. 6. *Tell me (O thou whom my ſoule loveth) where thou feedeſt, where thou makeſt thy flock to reſt at Noon: for why ſhould I bee as one that is vailed by the flockes of thy companions?*

Having ſpoken of the ſtate of Religion in the two Tribes, how, and for what cauſe they were afflicted; Now he ſpeakes of the ſcattered reliques in the other ten. This *verſe* containeth a queſtion of the beloved, and the next, the Lovers anſwer. This hath a petition in the firſt part, and an inquiry in the reſt: The Petition ſheweth the great care of the godly; their minds were inwardly inflamed with his love, Though he were out of their ſight. They ask of him himſelf (but whom ſhould they ask elſe) where he is whom they ſeek. They knew he was alwayes in heaven; but not without cauſe they doubted where he fed and folded his flock on earth. They ſaw their brethren falne away from *Iudah*, yet they knew there was neither God, nor Prieſthood, nor Law in *Iſrael*, 2 *Chro.* 25. 3. The queſtion is, *Why ſhould I be as one that is covered among the flocks of thy companions?* A woman veiled or covered, is taken for a Whore, as *Gen.* 38. 14. Their manner was to cover themſelves: It is alſo much uſed in mourning; as the Leaper was commanded, *Levit.* 13. 45. and *Mich.* 3. 7. It ſignifieth in this place, as if he ſhould ſay, Why ſhould I be like a woman, pining my ſelf with grief and ſorrow, in beholding the wicked Idolatry of the *Iſraelites*? Why ſhould I

live

live among these Idolaters? Where I am inforced to hide and cover my self, not daring to speak what I think? It is to be observed, that the seducers of the people, are called his fellowes: not by a true name, but by reason of their ambition, whereby they boasted to be equall to the high Shepherd, and carried themselves as his fellowes. For the ten Tribes had forsaken the true God, and coyned a new Religion at their pleasure, as yet they had the same right which the chiefe Shepherd had, to make laws for their flocks, how God should be worshipped of them. As the *Pope* now boasteth to be Christs fellow, making new Religions, with punishment inflicted on those which observe them not. Such was the pride of *Ieroboam* and the other *Israelites*, who would be fellows with him, to whom all are servants.

Vers. 7. *If thou know not (O thou fairest among women) goe thy way forth by the footsteps of thy flock, and feed thy Kids beside the Shepheards Tents.*

This is the answer of the Bridegroome, comforting his beloved in her griefe; who (whilest she, which was defiled with such deformity) was adjudged by him to be the fairest of women, and to excell all other congregations in the world. For although these reliques lurked here and there in the Kingdome of *Ieroboam*, yet made they but one Church with the two Tribes. Then he shewes her the path where she should go, and with his finger pointeth to the pastures where he rested whom she sought. The flock are the two Tribes, among whom the Church was more apparant; the Kids are the scattered reliques of the *Israelites*. When he appointed them pasture besides the Shepheards Tents, he bids them goe into *Iudea*, and worship the Lord, after the institution of the true Priests.

Vers. 8. *I have compared thee (O my Love) to my Mare, or to my Troope of horses in Pharaohs Chariots.*

This comparing of his Love to a *Mare*, may seem a grosse similitude to distressed Lovers, but to the Counsell of the Spirit most sweet and Divine.

We have seen in what case Religion was, aswell among the two Tribes, as among the dispersed reliques. This one verse toucheth the Civil state, what can be more servile, then to be joyned like a Horse to a Chariot, to draw therein at the Drivers pleasure, and against thy will to endure the Harnesse, the Bridle and the Whip? Such was the condition of that Kingdome, by whose aid and succour his *Love* was protected. For in the fifth year of the reigne of *Reboboam*, when they had a little breathed after their former troubles, *Shishak* the king of Egypt made war upon them, having twelve hundred Chariots, and a very great Hoste. Hee tooke many fenced Cities, and had proceeded to the utter wasting of the Land, had not the Lord at the length pitied them, and turned away the rage of his wrath from *Ierusalem*, so that he would not utterly destroy it, but onely bring it in bondage to the *Egyptians*. As he saith by the Prophet *Shemaiah*, 2 *Chron.* 12.8,9. *Nevertheless, they shall be his servants, that they may know my service, and the service of the Kingdomes of the countries.* This *Shishak* entring into the City, took away the treasures of the House of the Lord, and the treasures of the Kings house: he carried away also the shields of Gold which *Solomon* had made. Behold the Church now like a *Mare* in the Chariots of *Pharaoh*. The drawing *Mare* betokeneth servitude: The *Chariot*, that they should be compelled unto it by war. *Pharaoh* (by a common name) the King whom they should serve, how brief and plain it is described? yet, lest the Saints should faint altogether under the weight of such calamity, their comfort is, that he called her his *Mare*, as if he should say, although I deliver thee over to *Shishak*, yet understand, I have a care of thee. I do challenge thee for mine own, and thou shalt bee safe under my protection. Note that he, whom the holy Scripture calleth *Shishak*, is called by prophane Writers *Sterōosis*: And he joyned kings together to draw his *Chariot*, *Diod. sic lib.* 1. *pag.* 37. *lin.* 23.

Vers. 9. *Thy cheeks are comely with Turtles, or with rows of Iewels, thy neck with chaines of Gold.*

We heard in the Analysis; that this, and the two next verses, did belong to the Kingdome of *Abiah* and *Asa*. *Abijah* ruled but a while, and therefore no great variety of matter hapned in his time: therefore that which is common to both, is delivered in the beginning of this *verse*, but that which concerneth the affairs of *Asa*, is afterwards set forth more at large. The *Iewels* like *Turtles*, betoken chastity and carefulnesse: The two *Cheeks* are the most conspicuous parts of the body; these were the Tribes of *Iuda* and *Benjamin*, in whom the Church at that time was chiefly known unto men. This chastity and carefulnesse appeared first in *Abiah*, who making warre with *Ieroboam*, endeavoured with gentle speech to call back the ten Tribes from their wicked purpose, warning them of their falling away from God. *There are with you* (saith he) *Golden Calves, which Ieroboam made you for gods; but we have the Lord our God, whom we have not forsaken; and the Priests which minister unto the Lord, are the sonnes of Aaron, and the Levites wait upon their businesse*, 2 *Chron.* 13.8. 10, &c. for although this integrity was not pure without any pollution, as appeareth, 1 *Kings* 15.3. yet was it Turtle-like chastity to that filthy whoredome of the *Israelites*: so when *Abiah* and the two Tribes were beset both behind and before, they cryed unto the Lord, Behold the voice of Turtles, carefull, doubtlesse in so great a strait, but adorned with holinesse as with Jewels; the Lord heard them, and stroke *Ieroboam*, and all *Israel* before *Abijah* and *Iudah*, with a great slaughter, 2 *Chron.* 13,14,15. So *Asa* beset with almost infinite hosts of *Zerah* the *Ethiopian*, called upon the Lord, in the voice of a Turtle, saying, *It is nothing for thee to help, either with many, or with them that have no power; help us, O Lord our God, for we rest on thee, and in thy name we goe against this multitude; O Lord, thou art our God, let not man prevaile against thee.* Whereby the enemies were put to flight, and the Church greatly inriched with their spoiles, 2 *Chron.* 14.11, &c.

Vers. 10. *Wee will make the borders of Gold with studs of Silver.*

The Spirit proceedeth to shew the condition of the Church under *Asa*, that he might give her yet a more comely ornament, as it is declared by the taking counsell of adorning the *Spouse*; *we will make thee* (saith he) *borders of Gold*; that is, wont to be better, which is brought to passe by the conjoyned studies of many, then that which is done by one alone. Furthermore, Gold is now also added, no lesse excellent in the singular workmanship, then in the price it selfe, for it should be chequered with silver studs. This did openly foreshew that constrained meeting of the Kingdome by *Asa*; and and that consultation made by the common consent of the people, and of all orders in the fifteenth year of his reigne, of taking away all abominable gods out of the whole Land of *Iuda* and *Benjamin*; and a penalty imposed on him that would not seek the Lord, 2 *Chron.* 15.9,10. &c.

Now was order taken for adorning the spouse, not by the Kings authority alone, but by the decree of all orders. And that Reformation which was begun, in the beginning of his reigne, was now more fully grown to a ripenesse. The silver studs were that faithfull executing of the decree, whereby the Kings grand-mother *Mahaka* was put from her regency for her horrible idolatry. 2 *Chron.* 15.16.

Vers. 11. *Whilest the King was at his repast, my Spikenard gave the smell thereof.*

Yee have heard before that the gifts of the Spirit, are shadowed by ointments: and Spikenard (which is chief among ointments) rightly betokeneth the most excellent gifts. Therefore while the King sate, the spouse as it were opening a Box, perfumed all the neighbour-hood, with breathing out most holy graces.

But if any ask who the Prophet saith sat at this repast? Behold King *Asa*, compassed with a large garland of *Iewes and Israelites*,

Israelites, in ỹ assembly, where he made borders of gold with studs of silver, 2 *Chro.* 15 9.10. A covenant was made: but what mirth of a banquet could be compared with this delight? Furthermore the joy in sacrificing (which was great at that time) had the holy pleasure of banqueting conjoyned to it by the Law. As concerning the smell of the *Spikenard*: how pleasant was it to make a covenant among so many people, to worship the Lord, with all their heart, and with all their minde. Many of *Ephraim*, *Manasses and Simeon*, stirred up by the sweetnesse of this smell, clave to *Asa*, seeing the Lord his God to b with him, &c. As it is said, 2 *Chron.* 15. 9. Therefore whatsoever is spoken of the Church in the raign of *Asa*, is contained in these 3. little verses.

Vers. 12. *My welbeloved is as a bundle of Myrrhe unto me: He shall lie between my breasts.*

Herein are three things signified: sweetnesse of knowledge by *Myrhe*: Administration of doctrine by breasts: & the quiet and continuall use thereof by lying or resting. All which concerne the times of *Iehoshaphat*: who besides that care of preserving the chaste and pure Religion which he had received of his father, he was also excellent in the study of reaching, sending governours and Levites, with the book of the law to all the cities of *Iuda and Benjamin*, that they might teach the people, the will of God, 2 *Chr* 17. 7. 8. 9. He also appointed Judges through all the fenced cities, and in *Ierusalem*, of the Levites & Priests, and elders of the families, for the judgements of the Lord, and for controversies: which Judges were as breasts, yeelding the pleasant knowledge of Gods will. And also *Iehoshaphat* (diligently labouring that each one should perform his duty holily and faithfully) shewed a lively image of the Bridegroom, lying between the breasts of his love, 2 *Chron.* 19. 5, 6. &c. This resting was only called a provocation, because that since the Kingdom was rent under *Rehoboam*, a grievous darknes covered the Church, howsoever it seemed more pleasant at one time then at another, yet this rest was quiet, because the fear of the Lord fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about *Iuda*, that they should not fight against *Iehoshaphat*. The Philistians also brought tribute, and the *Arabians* flocks, 2 *Chron.* 17. 10. 11. the *Moabites* made war against them, but were soon overcome. After which they returned to their former rest, 2 *Chron.* 20. 29, 30. pleasant then was that rest, which was molested by no troubles.

Vers. 13. *My welbeloved is as a clustre of Camphire unto me, in the vines of Engedi.*

In these words is excellently declared what next succeeded *Iehoshaphat*: in the times of *Iehoram*, *Ahaz*, *Ioash*, *Amazia*, *Huzzia*, *Iotham and Ahaz*, whereof some were apparently wicked, some obscurely godly; he stayeth not to remember them all severally (least he should thereby pollute the marriage Feast, and cause the guests to loath the banquet) but briefly binds them up altogether in a bundle. And where he addeth in the end, *in the vines of Hengadi*: he teacheth, that this company should spring up in the middest of the chiefe Princes, who for their pleasant and plentifull fruit, may worthily be compared to most fruitfull vines. Now the Princes before them, were *Asa* and *Iehoshaphat*; after, *Hezekiah and Iosias*, between whom this clustre of *Camphire* with their berries, sprung up among the vines.

Vers. 14. *My love, behold thou art fair, behold thou art fair: Thine eyes are like the doves.*

The doubling of the words, declared her excellent beauty, especially with the *Hebrews*, who use it familiarly for Superlatives. The eyes of Doves are chaste and shamefaced, which wander not hither and thither to seek new loves. Such is the chastity of the Church, when as contented with one true God, she turneth not her eyes to idols, or any other invented worship. These things then undoubtedly pertain to *Hezekiah*, which restored true and pure Religion to the Church, casting out all Idolatry. Then truly the Church did wonderfully shine, when by the testimony of the spirit it self, the like had not been in *Ierusalem* since the dayes of *Solomon*, 2 *Chr.* 30. 26. But were there not dove-like eyes, which when hee considered their wanton lookes even towards the *Brazen Serpent*, hee commanded it to bee broken, though it had been Gods own ordinance, and an execellent Monument of former memory, 2 *Kings* 18. 4. Loe here excellent chastity joyned with like wisdom.

Vers. 15. *My welbeloved, behold thou art fair and pleasant: Also our Bed is green.*

How coherent is this praise? which aswell instructeth the minde in knowledge, as it endueth the heart with Religion. It is one thing for us to be thankfull to Christ, & another thing for Christ to be thankfull to us. He accounts us thankfull, by reason of election, we feel not him sweet and pleasant, before we be called to the knowledge of the truth: and our hearts be kindled with a desire of godlinesse. But if any godly one desire to know the state of the Church after the death of *Hezekias*, the Bride declareth it in commendations of the Bridegroom. She then flourisheth, when she may freely behold and set forth the beauty of her beloved, which verily hapned in the time of *Iosias*, in whose excellent sanctity the Church saw the sweetnesse of her beloved, 2 *Chron.* 34. *and* 35. At sixteene years of age he began to seek the God of his father *David*, four years after, to cleer *Iuda and Ierusalem* from the high places and the groves: and from carved and molten images, 2 *Chron.* 34. 3. Religion adorneth every age, but especially that tender age aswell for the present and unexpected ripenes of it, as for a greater hope thereof in time to come.

But the latter part of the verse, declareth more fully the History of *Manasses* and *Ammon*. *Also our bed is green.* The Kings chamber (before signified the Temple. Neither is it to be doubted, but (Bed) is here used for the same, which is wont to be placed in the more inward and privy Chamber, where the godly may injoy Christ most familiarly. This Bed waxeth green like the meadowes, in the beginning of the spring, whose beautie the winter had defaced; if they had alwayes kept their greennesse, it had been unnecessary to make mention of it. And if *Iosias* had succeeded next after *Hezekias*, it had been as superfluous to make mention of the Temples flourishing, as of green grasse in summer. The words then declare aswel that winter which miserably afflicted the Church under *Manasses* and *Ammon*, which shook off altogether the flowers of godlinesse, and exposed Christs Bed to all injuries and tempestuous stormes, 2 *Chron.* 33. As also the pleasantnesse of a milder time, under *Iosias*, who beautifully repaired the winters spoiles. And the event very well answered the prophesie, for the purity of Religion was the first care of *Iosias*, when he was yet a childe: but after in the eighteeneth year of his reigne he applied his minde to re-edifie the house of God, desirous to leave the Bed green, which he had found grievously rent and torne with stormes and tempest, 2 *Chron.* 34. &c.

Vers. 16. *The beames of our house are of Cedar, our Rafters are of Firre.*

This more fully sets forth that which was begun before, declared by the green bed, for first the grasse is green which afterward ariseth into a stalk, & forthwith groweth till in the end it come to its full ripenesse. The infancy of *Iosias* was pleasant, but his riper age yeelded more pleasant fruit, whereof there was hope, even from his cradle. He sent *Shaphan*, *Maaseiah, and Ioah* to repaire the house of the Lord his God. He gathered mony of the Tribes of *Manasses* and *Ephraim*, and all the rest of *Israel*, and of all *Iuda and Benjamin*, to repaire the common house of the Bridegroom and the Bride; Wherein they might mutually delight themselves; He gate workmen and builders to hew stone and timber for beams, & for couples of the houses which the Kings of *Iuda* had destroyed, 2 *Chron.* 34. 8. Worthily was it now foretold that the beames should be of cedar, when the building was set forward

ward with ſuch coſt, care and diligence, whereby the firſt beauty of it might in ſome ſort appear, though perhaps it could not fully be reſtored. And hitherto the condition of the Church was tollerable, oftentimes afflicted with many miſeries, but now and then refreſhed again, when religious princes ruled. The following times were more ſubject to calamities; To which deſervedly a new chapter is given, bringing new fortune with it.

CHAP. II.

I Am the roſe of the field, *and* the lillie of the valleyes.

2 Like a lillie among the thornes, ſo *is* my love among the daughters.

3 Like the apple tree among the trees of the forreſt, ſo *is* my welbeloved among the ſons *of men*: under his ſhadow had I delight, and ſate downe: & his fruit *was* ſweet unto my mouth.

4 He brought me into the wine cellar, and love *was* his banner over me.

5 Stay me with flagons, and comfort me with apples: for I am ſick of love.

6 His left hand *is* under mine head, and his right hand doth embrace me.

7 I charge you, O daughters of Jeruſalem, by the roes and by the hindes of the field, that ye ſtir not up, nor waken *my* love untill he pleaſe.

8 *It is* the voice of my welbeloved: behold, he cometh leaping by the mountaines, and skipping by the hills.

9 My welbeloved is like a roe, or a young hart: loe, he ſtandeth behinde our wall, looking forth of the windowes, ſhewing himſelf thorow the grates.

10 My welbeloved ſpake and ſaid unto me, Ariſe my love, my fair one, and come thy way.

11 For behold, winter is paſt: the rain is changed, and is gone away.

12 The flowers appear in the earth: the time of the ſinging of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.

13 The figtree hath brought forth her young figs: and the vines with *their* ſmall grapes have caſt a ſavour: ariſe my love, my fair one, and come away.

14 My dove that art in the holes of the rock, in the ſecret places of the ſtaires, ſhew me thy ſight, let mee hear thy voice: for thy voice is ſweet, and thy ſight comely.

15 Take us the foxes, the little foxes, which deſtroy the vines: for our vines *have* ſmall grapes.

16 My welbeloved *is* mine, and I am his: hee feedeth among the lillies,

17 Untill the day break, and the ſhadowes flee away: returne, my welbeloved, *and* be like a roe, or a young hart upon the mountaines of Bether.

The Analyſis.

THere remain yet other Kings unto the laſt Zedekias, *whoſe times are deſcribed*, verſ. 1.2. *And ſuch ſhould the Church be until their carrying away. In the Captivity it ſelf, there ſhould be ſome comfort as well to ſome few left in their Countrey*, verſ. 3. *as to the whole multitude in the enemies countrey; partly, that the Bridegroom ſhould marvellouſly preſerve the Church there*, verſ. 4.5. 6.7. *partly, that at length hee ſhould deliver thence, whereof there is an appearance more remote*, verſ. 8.9. *neer at hand*, verſ. 10. 11.12.13. *and at length the effecting of it*, verſ. 14. *Hitherto the Captivity, the ſtate of the reſtored condition ſhould be divers, which we have divided into two times. One to the birth of Chriſt, the other from thence to his death. The time next after the returne, ſhould be ſomewhat troubleſome in the times next following*, verſ. 15. *which after a little while ſhould receive a tollerable reſt*, verſ. 16. *and* 17. *Then more afflicted in the latter age, ſhewed in the beginning of the Chapter following.*

THE EXPOSITION.

Verſ. 1. *I am the Roſe of the field, and the Lillie of the vallies.*

IN this complaint the Church declareth her calamity, as if ſhee ſhould ſay: I ſmell moſt ſweetly as ỹ Roſe, & am moſt beautifull as the Lillie: yet to the Cropping and trampling on of every one, I lie no leſſe open then the flowers in the valleyes, and thoſe which grow in paſture grounds. My wall is broken down, my hedge pluckt up by the root, and every one feedeth on my beauty at pleaſure, as the Herds on the graſſe in the fields. Yet I deſpaire not in theſe afflictions, being aſſured, that to my Beloved I am moſt ſweet and pleaſant. And ſo is the Church wont to be, who is never ſo much caſt down, but is now and then lifted up and refreſhed, by thinking on the excellencie which God hath beſtowed on her. Thoſe times which followed the reſtoring of the Temple by *Ioſias*, do teach us that this complaint was juſt. Firſt, *Ioſias* himſelf, a moſt pleaſant flower of piety, ſweeter then any Roſe, was cropped by *Pharaoh Neco*, and ſlain at *Megiddo*. *Iehoahaz* his ſon when he had raigned onely three moneths, was carried away Captive by the ſame *Pharaoh*, and the Countrey made tributary. *Iehoiakim* ſerved *Nebuchadnezzar*. *Iehoiazin* alſo after three moneths Raigne was carried into exile with his Courtiers and the Mightier men of the Countrey. But moſt apparantly under *Zedechias*, in whoſe raigne, *Ieruſalem* was taken and miſerably ſpoiled. The Temple burnt, the houſes puld down, the walles overturned, the City made equall to the ground, and the people (pulled from their Countrey ſeats,) carried Captive into bondage: as free libertie given to the enemie of making havock in the Church, as in the open fields. *The enemy hath ſtretched out his hand*, (*Lamenteth* Jeremy, *Chap.* 1.10.) *upon all her pleaſant things, for ſhe hath ſeen, &c.*

Verſ. 2. *Like a Lillie among the thorns, ſo is my Love among the daughters.*

The Bridegroome anſwereth the former complaint, and teacheth plainly how his beloved is not deſtitute of that comfort which ſhee thought ſhe wanted: If ſhe would truly conſider that. He acknowledgeth her to be a Lilly, naked of her former fences, expoſed to the prey as in the open fields: Yet not void of all ſuccour, but as it were, ſo guarded every where with a thick hedge of Briers and Buſhes, that neither the herds of Cattell, nor the wilde beaſts could approach to do her injurie: For the ſimilitude doth not onely ſet forth her excellency, but chiefly her ſuccour and ſafety. That the

Church ſhould certainly be preſerved ſafe and ſonnd, remaining in the midſt of her Enemies, and that ſhee ſhould bee no leſſe defended by her very enemies, then flowers are wont to be among the thornes, who beſet them about with pricking branches. It is manifeſt that the Church made triall of this comfort in thoſe hard times, when her ſafety was maintained by the helpe of them, by whoſe hoſtile hatred ſhee ſeemed, utterly deſtroyed. *Pharaoh* defended her againſt *Nebuchadnezzar*, and *Nebuchadnezzar* againſt *Pharaoh*. Neither of them would root out the Nation, as long as there was hope of faithfull obedience, but ſuppoſed to defend it for himſelf, as a ſound refuge againſt the breaking in of Enemies; with theſe bryers for a time, ſhee put away extream calamity.

Verſ. 3. *Like the Apletree among the trees of the forreſt, ſo is my welbeloved among the ſons of men: under his ſhadow had I delight, and ſate downe: and his fruit was ſweet unto my mouth.*

Hitherto the ſtate of the Church, untill they were carried away Captive by *Nebuchadnezzar*. Now the Captivity followeth: whoſe firſt comfort is reſt granted to the miſerable Reliques, which (when the reſt were carried away) had leave granted to remain in their own countrey. This comfort is declared by the ſimilitude of an apple tree, which is but a low tree, neither in length of body, or in farre ſpreading of limbs may it compare with many others, yet her fruit excelleth many others in profit and pleaſantneſſe. The ſimilitudes are alwayes fitted to the times and the divers conditions which the Church enjoyeth. This apple tree betokeneth *Gedaliah* whom *Nebuchad-nezzar* made governour over the people which were left in the land, 2 *King.*25.22. He was low in regard of the taleneſſe of the former Kings, or of thoſe high cedars which flouriſhed in the *Babyloman* mountains, yet in ſhadow he was very pleaſant, and in fruit wholſome, ſo that all the ſcattered Church flocked under his covering, chiefly when he had joyned the Prophet *Ieremy* to him, *Ier.*40. For now were the cedar beams and the firre rafters broken, and no leave granted to remain, no not in the rubbiſh of the city. They dwelt at *Mizpah* in the open fields, or at leaſt under the ſhadow of trees. As alſo the prophet *Micha* foretold, *Chap.* 41.10. *Iohanan* and the other Captains ſo rejoyced in this ſhadow, that they diſcloſed the treaſon of *Iſhmael*, deſirous to prevent his wicked purpoſe with juſt puniſhment, *Ier.*40. 13.14. &c.

Verſ. 4. *He brought me into the wine-ſeller, and love was his banner over me.*

Such was the condition of the ſmall company remaining. The other captived multitude were kept in the enemies country 70. years: as it is declared in theſe four verſes. *He brought me* (ſaith ſhe) *into the wine-ſeller*, that is a place under ground, where wine is laid and kept for uſe, as if ſhe ſhould ſay, he brought me into a ſorrowfull and dark hole, as it were into a cave, and a place under ground where notwithſtanding I found wine laid up, which was no leſſe appearance of his love towards me, then the enſigne or Banner carried before the ſouldiers is wont to be a ſigne of the captaines preſence.

This wine-ſeller was partly *Babylon*, whither the people were carried away by *Nebuchad-nezzar*: and partly *Egypt*, whither the reſt went of their own accord, when *Gedaliah* was ſlain. *Ier.*41. Neither did the Church want comfort in theſe miſeries, whoſe priſon was furniſhed with wine. For the word of the Lord, (which is many times compared to wine) was plentifull in this priſon: and the love thereof as conſpicuous, as the Banner carried before the Army in the time of warre, *Ieremiah* ſending letters to thoſe that were carried away began this wine unto them: ſhewing them of the proſperity which God would give them in the land of their captivity. *Chap.*29. But that which is here briefly ſpoken is declared more at large in the verſes following. Here let us conſider the wonderfull mercy of our God, who ſeaſoneth his corrections, towards his Church with ſuch gentleneſſe, that when they thinke themſelves, as it were, overwhelmed and buried in the grave, yet there they finde wine and great plenty of delights.

Verſ. 5. *Stay me with Flagons, and comfort me with apples, for I am ſick of love.*

Theſe words more plainly ſhew that the houſe of wine was no banqueting houſe, but a cellar wherein wines are laid up. For the lover is not wont to languiſh with deſire, where plenty of the thing loved is preſent; & ſuch is that banquet where the Maſter of the Feaſt is abſent. The Bride therefore fainteth, becauſe ſhe findeth not her beloved preſent in this wine-cellar, (for in adverſity God is ſaid to be abſent from us) ſo that ſhe had need to be upholden of her fellows, leſt ſhe ſhould fall for want of ſtrength, wherein was moſt elegantly declared, what deſire the Church ſhould have towards God during the captivity, and by what means ſhe ſhould be ſatisfied untill the full reſtitution. For in that ſhe deſireth Flagons and apples, ſhe ſheweth that theſe were ſufficient helpes for her; Apples are the fruit of a low ſhadowing tree, as before: Flagons are veſſels wherein wine is put, and out of which it is powred to drink; the apples betokened ſome inferiour perſons with power, under whoſe defence the captived people might lurke in ſafety. The Flagons noted the prophets and prieſts, full of ſweet and wholſome doctrine: whereof there ſhould be ſome, which only like Flagons ſhould yeeld the wine of heavenly knowledge to the people, when plenty of hogſheads could not be had in exile, and ſuch adverſity. God beſtowed the commodity of both in the captivity, for he wonderfully exalted *Daniel*, *Hananiah*, *Miſhael*, *and Hazariah*, who like wholſome apple trees, ſhadowed the afflicted Church with their boughes, and fed and refreſhed the miſerable people with pleaſant fruit. God gate them favour with the *Median and Perſian* Kings, by whom (being appointed governour of the Provinces,) they procured much reſt to their people, *Dan.*1.19.20. *and* 2.48.49. Theſe were the apples by whom their feebleneſſe was ſupported. The Prophets were the Flagons. *Ezechiel* in *Babylon*, to whom the Lord joyned *Daniel*, who ſupplied both the parts of the apple and of the flagon, being advanced to great dignity and moſt excellent in the gift of propheſie; He ſuffered alſo *Ieremy* to be drawn into Egypt, that either people might have flagons, out of which they might draw the wine of Gods word, both to quench their thirſt, and to ſuccour their fainting ſtrength decayed.

Verſ. 6. *His left hand is under mine head, and his right hand doth imbrace me.*

By this geſture of imbracing is plainly ſhewed, that God manifeſtly declared at that time how he loved his Church: for he did not only preſerve her by mans aid, but alſo defended her with his own ſtretched-out-arme from heaven, which we know was done, in the wonderfull deliverance, firſt, of the thee children out of the fierie furnace, who loved Religion more then life, *Dan.*3. Then of *Daniel* himſelfe out of the Lions den, *Dan.*6. For whiles God by ſuch wonderfull powerful power, preſerved the trees from all danger, which he had planted for a ſhadow to his Church, he might worthily ſeeme to hold the Church in his hands, and to imbrace her with both his armes.

Verſ. 7. *I charge you, O daughters of Ieruſalem, by the Roes, and by thee Hindes of the field, that yee ſtirre not up, nor waken my love, untill he pleaſe.*

The daughters of *Ieruſalem*, are the citizens of the Church. The Roes and the Hindes, are thoſe nations which held the Church in captivity. The meaning of this verſe is, as if ſhe ſhould have ſaid (for they are the words of the Church, as the learned *Tremelius and Iunius* obſerve) I require of you, ye daughters of *Ieruſalem*, that ye ſwear to me by the Roes and Hindes of the field, that if by your fault, ye drive away my love, from my imbracing; Thoſe Roes and Hindes ſhall

revenge it on you with deſerved puniſhment. Not that it is lawfull to ſwear by enemies, or by any other then God, but figuratively by the forme of an oath, ſhe teacheth, it ſhould be as certain that the citizens of the Church ſhould avoid all grievous offences, with no leſſe diligent heed (namely, for fear of the enemies among whom they lived) then if a covenant had been undertaken of that matter, and confirmed by an oath, wherefore the hiſtory of this oath is the reſt of the time of the captivitie.

Verſ. 8. *It is the voice of my welbeloved: behold, he commeth leaping by the mountains, and skipping by the hills.*

Now after the ſeventy years captivity, followeth the delivery; whoſe prepartion a far off is contained in this and the verſe following, conſiſting of a threefold circumſtance: Of the voice of her beloved. His ſwift coming; and his preſence. *The voice of my beloved:* Shee falleth into this ſpeech abruptly, as if ſhe had heard the voice of her beloved, calling her from a far off, and had been ſmitten with a ſudden joy for the newneſſe of the matter, even that which ſhe chiefly deſired. Now in this whole preparation, King *Cyrus* repreſenteth the perſon of her beloved, whom God had ſtirred up to deliver the Church: Then after a long time was the voice of the beloved firſt heard, when the rumor began to be ſpred abroad, that the *Medes* and *Perſians* would make war againſt *Babylon*. The Prophets noted out *Cyrus* by name, many years before; that when they ſhould heare him preparing for war, they might not doubt, but it was the voice it ſelf of the beloved, *Iſay* 44. 28. *Thus ſaith the Lord of* Cyrus, *He is my Shepheard, and ſhall performe all my pleaſure*: and 45. 1. 2. 3. *Thus ſaith the Lord, to his anointed* Cyrus, *whoſe right hand I have holden to ſubdue nations, &c. that thou mayeſt know, that I the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of* Iſrael. But the report was ſpred far and wide, before the Kings brought their hoſts to *Babylon*: Iſa. 21. 3. *I was bowed down at the hearing of it, I was diſmaied at the ſeeing of it, my heart panted, &c.* under the perſon of the *Babylonians*. And *Ier.* 50. 43. *The King of* Babylon *hath heard the report of them, and his hands waxed feeble, anguiſh took hold of him.* And 51. 29. *As* Babylō *hath cauſed the ſlain of* Iſrael *to fall, ſo at* Babylon *ſhall fall the ſlain of all the earth.* But this voice ſo fearfull to the *Babylonians*, was moſt pleaſant and acceptable to the oppreſſed and baniſhed Church. Now for the ſwiftneſſe of his comming, it is ſaid, *Hee came leaping*, as it were, haſtning over the Mountains on ſtilts, ſo paſſing over the little hils, that hee did not at all touch them. In this manner was the comming of *Cyrus*, ſwift and ſudden. How much buſineſſe he brought to paſſe after he once undertook it; he ſubdued the *Armenians* and *Cræſus* the *Lydian*, in a trice; the *Hyrcanians*, *Bactrians*, *Suſians*, *Carians*, *Phrygians*, and *Cappadocians*; he ſcarce touched with the tops of his toes, they ſo readily yeelded to him of their own accord: See *Herodotus*, *Clio*, *Xenophon*, *Cyropæd.*

Verſ. 9. *My welbeloved is like a Roe, or a young Hart, lo, he ſtandeth behind our wall, looking forth of the windows, ſhewing himſelf thorow the grates.*

The firſt part of this verſe declareth the ſwiftneſſe of the coming of *Cyrus*; the later part deſcribeth his preſence, and that by three circumſtances: *His ſtanding behind the wall; his looking thorow the window*, and *ſhewing himſelf thorow the grates*; All which ſet forth unto us, the beſieging of *Babylon* by *Cyrus* and *Darius*: for theſe mountains and hils quickly paſt over; the Tents were pitcht at the walls of *Babylon*, there *Cyrus* ſtood a while behind the wall, doubting what to do: his retinue charging him, and nothing proſpering after his deſire; at length, *hee looked forth thorow the lettice of the window*; that is, hee took crafty counſell, and conſidered ſecretly, how he might gain the City; when turning the river *Euphrates*, he brought his army into the City by the channell ſo privily, that the City was taken before any force of battery was felt. Neither ſhould any marvell, that the name of the beloved is given to a heathen King: for whatſoever the Church hath, the *beloved* himſelf yeeldeth it, but hee uſeth divers inſtruments, on whom hee beſtoweth his own Name, that all help may be properly underſtood to be of him whoſe name the inſtruments beare.

Verſ. 10. *My welbeloved ſpake, and ſaid unto me, Ariſe my Love, my fair one, and come away.*

Such was the preparation farther off; that which is neerer followeth: Friſt, declared univerſally in this verſe, then ſeverally by parts in the verſes following. This ſweet and pleaſant ſalutation hapned at that time, when *Babylon* was taken, and *Balſhazzer* ſlain; the *Medes* and *Perſians* obtaining the Empire. See how the Edict of *Cyrus*, of delivering the people, agreeth with this pleaſant calling, *Ezra* 1. 3. *and* 4. *Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to* Jeruſalem, *which is in* Judea, *and build the houſe of the Lord God of* Iſrael, *(hee is the God) which is in* Jeruſalem. *And whoſoever remaineth in any place where he ſojourneth, let the men of his place help him with ſilver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beaſts, beſides the free-will offering for the houſe of God which is at* Jeruſalem. Here the welbeloved boaſteth or glorieth in the beauty of the *Spouſe*, and while he breaketh the bonds of her ſervitude, and giveth her leave to depart, hee maketh proclamation, *Ariſe, and come away.* And verily, though *Ezra*, a moſt learned Prieſt, relateth that matter for the worthineſſe of it, moſt plentifully in the whole Chapter; yet there the thing done is ſcarce more plainly declared, then it is here foretold to be done.

Verſ. 11. *For behold, Winter is paſt, the rain is changed and is gone away.*

The ſeverall explication is manifeſted either in removing the hindring cauſes in this verſe, or by ſetting down the helping cauſes in the two verſes following. *Winter*, or the violent ſtorme is changed. This Winter is twofold, proper, and figurative: properly, it teacheth that about the end of Winter the people prepared for their return, ſtirred up thereunto by the Edict of *Cyrus*, which may be confirmed by probable reaſon; for their firſt feaſt after their return, was the Feaſt of *Tabernacles*. To the celebrating of which Feaſt, ſome time paſſed before the people could come together, ſcattered through the fields and Cities, *Ezra* 3. 1. Then after certain years *Hezra* himſelf departing from *Babylon*, with a readier or more prepared band, ſpent four Moneths in the journey, *Hezra* 7. 9. whence it is likely that thoſe firſt betook themſelves to the journey in the beginning of the Spring, or not long after. The figurative Winter is the wrath of God, which (of late) fell upon the *Iewes*, like a horrible ſtorm, & ſcattered them hither and thither, like ſtraw or ſtubble. This wrath at length pacified, was changed into a great calme and quietneſſe.

Verſ. 12. *The flowers appeare in the earth, the time of the ſinging of Birds is come, and the voice of the Turtle is heard in our land.*

This, and the verſe following, ſhew the helping cauſes, which are alſo proper, or metaphoricall. Proper, the commodity of the time, moſt pleaſant; whereupon hapned the decree and the counſell of returning, and the preparation thereof, whereof was ſpoken in the former verſe. *Metaphoricall*, God was not onely mercifull, (as already hath been ſaid) but partly alſo the reconciled will of ſtrangers, partly, the exceeding readineſſe of the *Iews* themſelves. The nations hearkning to the Edict of *Cyrus*, and God inwardly ſtirring up their hearts; with how great deſire did they further the return, helping them abundantly, and furniſhing them plentifully with gold, and with ſilver, with aid, and with cattell, and with other precious things, *Ezra* 1. 6. The *Iewes* delight and pleaſure therein, no doubt was, that it might well be compared with flowers, with ſinging of Birds, and the blooming of trees: Alſo among the *Iewes* were divers orders of men, which ſeem here to be ſignified by the ſeverall ornaments of the Spring, which *Ezra* divideth into three ranks:

ranks: *The Elders of Families, The Priests and Levites, and the common People*, Chap. 1.5. and 2.70. Here *Solomon* proceedeth by an inverted order, making no reckoning of the dignity, but of the deed, and of the nature of it. I suppose the common people are the flowers appearing in the earth, which grow confusedly, here and there, one among another, and prevent the trees themselves in their hasty ripening. *Well*, expressing the headlong study of the common people, who are wont to run before the industry of the Magistrate: *The singing Birds and Turtles*, are men of the Leviticall Order, which went before the people, some with holy songs, and some with sacrifices, &c.

Vers. 13. *The Fig-tree hath brought forth her young figs, and the Vines with their small grapes have cast a savour: Arise my love, my faire one, and come away.*

Hitherto the meaner helping causes; here we have the mightier, and more principall: As if he should say, not only the Flowers of the grasse, but also the shrubs and taller trees, which should guide and govern the people and multitude, should set their hands to work, and bend all their force to back the people. *Cyrus* restored to them every instrument of silver and gold, which *Nebuchadnezzar* had taken away. *Zerubbabel, Iosua, Nehemiah*, and other excellent men, made themselves Captains over the people, that by well ordering, they might bring all their desires to a wished end. So in this preparation here, shine as Stars, the Edict of *Cyrus*, the time of the year, the office of the Nations, and the divers orders and degrees of the people returning, which are all declared more at large in the first and second of *Ezra*; he useth the same compellation or calling by name, in the end, which he did before, that he might shew, as it were, with bounded limits, in what space of time, this description of the Spring is included.

Vers. 14. *My Dove, thou art in the holes of the Rocke, in the secret places of the staires, shew me thy countenance, let me heare thy voice, for thy voice is sweet, and thy sight comely.*

The delivery it selfe is declared in this one verse, which that it might appeare and sinke the deeper in their mindes, he remembreth them of their late Condition by *the holes of the Rocke, and the secret places of the staires*: that the Church should as well remember to attribute her received safty to God, who all this while yeelded her no lesse refuge from the rage of her enemies, then the high rocks and dark lurking places are wont to be to the Doves. As also to put her in minde that she was not in her own habitation, but in a lurking place, fit to keep her in safety in exile, and not appointed to dwell in. Shee must therefore depart out of that prison, and make hast to the Palace, which her beloved had built her. No doubt, they exhorted one another at that time, that they should preferre the promise of God in their Country seates, before the delights of the place, whereinto they were banished, wherewith many were so taken and insnared, that they altogether neglected a return. Now whereas he requireth that she should shew him her countenance, and should cause her voice to be heard; he sheweth them that at length the Church should be seen again openly, which had long lyen hid from mens sight in darknesse. And that voyce which her lover is so desirous to heare, is the voyce of mourning and weeping, whereby the faithfull in the time of deliverance, should acknowledge their former offences, whereby they had provoked God, and should earnestly and heartily bewaile them. *When ye shall call upon me* (saith the Lord by *Ieremy*) *that yee may go and pray unto me, then will I heare you: and seeking yee shall find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart*, Chap. 29. 12, 13. This is that countenance all overwhelmed with teares, in whose sight God is so much delighted: this is that mournfull and suspicious voyce, then which nothing is to him more sweet or pleasant: so the second company which *Ezra* brought back, beginning their progresse with a Proclaimed fast, shewed ȳ same aspect to their lover, causing him to [illegible]

Vers. 15. *Take us the Foxes, the little Foxes that spoile the vines: for our Vines have tender Grapes.*

Hitherto of the Captivity, now followeth the restored condition of the Church. And first of that State which it obtained next the return in this, and the verses following. It appeareth not plainly, whether these be the words of Christ, or the Church, or of both: truly that which is here commanded concernes them both: yet seeing it belongs to his government and authority, to take away all hurtfull things, which may damnifie the Church, they seem rather to be his. These words teach three things of the Church of that time. First, she hath little Foxes lying in waite. Secondly, those Foxes are to be taken and their deceits made vaine. Thirdly, the beginnings of the restored Church were so tender, that they might bee grievously hurt by the feebliest enemy. As to the first, The Foxes betoken a crafty, subtile and dissembling enemy: whereunto also the Hebrew word very well agreeth, which signifies to destroy under a shew of friendship. As Usurers use, who seeming to help poor men, utterly undoe them with borrowed mony. How to the life happned these things. For we know with what craft the Enemies endeavoured to hinder the building of the Temple, craftily offering ayde, and corrupting the Counsellors with rewards, as long as the Kings favoured the Jews, but when they saw their favours a little to decline, they spared no reproches, and false accusations, whereby they might procure hatred to the new returned Jews: yea to their fraud they added force, endeavouring to hinder the begun work by Armes, *Ezra* 4.23. Now these Enemies are called little Foxes, in regard of the *Syrian*, *Assyrian* and *Babylonian* Kings, which afflicted them in former times. These Governours were base and obscure persons, yet could these little wilde beasts do much in such tender beginnings of the Church, whereby the work of the house of God was hindred, and being begun lay still about 27 years, *Ezra* 4.24. But at length those little Foxes were taken, when *Darius* confirmed the building, and imposed a most grievous punishment on those that by any means hindred the work, *Ezra* 6.11. Yea there wanted not Foxes, for *Nehemiah* found *Sanballat*, *Tobias*, and the rest of that crew as troublesome as the former. First, craftily studying privily to oppresse them, *Nehe.* 4.7. But missing thereof they attempted violence under colour of conference, having hired the Priests, Prophets, and chiefe of the people to deliver them *Nehemiah*. These were Fox-like times, by the Testimony of *Tobia* himself, who said, *Nehe.* 4.2. *Although they build, yet if a Fox go up, he shall even breake downe their stony wall*, &c.

Vers. 16. *My welbeloved is mine, and I am his; he feedeth among the Lillies.*

That is to say, we rest quietly in one anothers love. He is contented with me onely, and I with him alone. Her lover hath such care of his flock, that not like other herdsmen, he seeketh onely grassie Pastures for his sheep, but also the delights of gardens for them. Then at length those Fox-like times received a reasonable happy condition, the holy Ceremonies were used, and all wicked superstitions were valiantly and constantly refused, to the which while the Church applyed her study, shee shewed her selfe to depend wholly on the love of her onely Lover. Before the Jewes were banished to *Babylon*, they were wont to follow strange gods, wherefore they were so grievously and often reprehended by the Prophets, and which brought upon them almost utter destruction, and so long Captivity. In all which time they seemed no lesse to have forsaken God, then God himself to have forsaken their services. But now at length called back to their Country seates, they would preserve chaste piety with a more firme purpose, constant will and desire. Neither would they ever hereafter depart from Gods holy Religion, even with the hazard of their lives, which came to passe accordingly, for we read of no troubles afterward in the Church untill the time

[illegible] two verses compre[illegible] memory of about two hundred years, namely, from [illegible] restoring of the Church by *Cyrus* to *Alexander* the great: [illegible] is, during the whole Monarchie of the *Persians*, as appeareth by *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*.

Vers. 17. *Vntill the day break, and the shadowes flie away; turn my beloved, and be thou like a Roe, or young Hart upon the mountaines of Bether.*

The two former verses shewed the condition of the Church next after their return: this *verse* intreateth of times a little farther off, yet with a continued order joyned with the former. Herein first he setteth down certaine bounds in the beginning of the verse, and then delivereth the summe of it in the rest. The bounds define that space in the compasse whereof this consideration is contained: namely, *untill the day break, &c.* Which words signifie that most renowned day of Christs death; as it shall after appeare: whose morning and mid-day are here most elegantly declared by adjuncts. All agree, that the aire or winde is usually more troublesome in the morning and evening then in the rest of the day, as also *Aristotle* teacheth in his Problemes. But why is this day described unto us, by the troublesome windy morning, and the vanishing shadowes? Because it was chiefly to be noted in both these proprieties. The morning blew turbulently, for straightway in the morning, the high-Priests with the Elders and Scribes, held a Counsell and delivered Jesus to *Pilate*, *Mark* 15. 1. But at the sixt houre, that is to say, noone it self, the shadowes flew away overwhelmed with darknesse in a strange manner, so that the Jewes saw not yet an end put to their old shadowes. *Mark*. 15. 33. But then especially they vanished, when the third houre after, at the death of the *Messias*, the vaile of the Temple rent in two parts, and the hand-writing of the Law (as well of all the Ceremonies as that which was against us) was altogether cut off. This is that day so famous in the Scripture, and so exactly defined, *Dan*. 9. 24, 25. Of this Christ himself maketh often mention, *Ioh*. 7. 30. and 8. 20. and 13. 1. The time is here set forth of the condition of the ancient Church from *Alexander* the great to the death of Christ. So was that time limited. Now if ye seek what the whole state of the Church was during all that space; The swift return of her love, *like a Roe on the mountaines of Bether*, sheweth it us. The mountains of *Bether* are in *Gilead* beyond *Iordan*, whence they take their name: for they are divided from the rest of *Iudea* by the River *Iordan*. And that whole Tract is called *Bithron*, 2 *Sam*. 2. 29. as *Tremelius* and *Iunius* do observe. This similitude teacheth that her beloved seemed sometimes to withdraw himself, yet no farther then the neighbour mountains of *Bether*, seated in the borders of the holy land, whence he could quickly come to her ayde, like a Roe or a young Hinde. *Ptolemeus Lagi* grievously afflicted *Iudea*, but it lasted not long. Nor was there any violence done to Religion. Afterwards *Antiochus* the great, strove with the *Ptolemees*, *Eupator*, and *Epiphanes* with doubtfull fortune of the warres, so that the Jewes were sometimes constrained to change their Masters, yet they alwayes prospered without great danger of perishing. Her beloved was not alwayes ready to help her, these first 137. years, but he suffered her not long to complain, running, ready to help her, from the bordering Mountaines as need required.

CHAP. III.

IN my bed by night I sought him that my soule loved: I sought him, but I found him not.

2 I will rise *therefore* now, and go about in the city by the streets, and by the open places, *and* will seek him that my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not.

3 The watchmen that went about the city, found me: *to whom I said*, Have you seen him, whom my soule loveth?

4 When I had past a little from them, then I found him whom my soule loved: I took hold on him and left him not, till I had brought him unto my mothers house, into the chamber of her that conceived me.

5 I charge you, O danghters of Jerusalem, by the roes and by the hindes of the field, that ye stirre not up, nor waken *my* love untill he please.

6 Who is he that commeth up out of the wildernesse like pillars of smoake perfumed with myrrhe and incense, *and* with all the spices of the merchant?

7 Behold his bed, which is Solomons: threescore strong men *are* round about it, of the valiant men of Israel.

8 They all handle the sword, *and are* expert in war, every one *hath* his sword upon his thigh for the feare by night.

9 King Solomon made himself a palace of the trees of Lebanon.

10 He made the pillars thereof of silver, *and* the pavement thereof of gold, the hangings thereof of purple whose mids *was* paved with the love of the daughters of Jerusalem.

11 Come forth ye daughters of Zion, and behold the king Solomon, with the crown, wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his marriage, and in the day of the gladnesse of his heart.

The Analysis.

HItherto hath been spoken of that milder time of the Church after the return from the Captivity, both of the time neere and farther off. Now shall be shewed a more troublesome time by the absence of her beloved, which in vaine she seeketh in her bed, verse 1. *in the Citie,* verse 2. *or among the watchmen of the City,* verse 3, *but at length she findes and holds him,* verse 4. *and* 5.

And thus farre to the birth of Christ. The rest of the time unto his death is as it were an overseeing of the marriage, whose preparing is in respect of the Bride, verse 6. *in respect of the beloved and his bed,* verse 7, 8. *His Litter,* verse 9, 10. *The solemnity of the Marriage which giveth us a King crowned,* verse 11. *And his love very comely, &c.* Chap. 4. 1, 2, 3, *to the* 7.

THE EXPOSITION.

Vers. 1. *By night on my Bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not.*

OF all the space of time untill the break of the day (that is to say, that day wherein Christ dyed) worthy of memory is that night, which the Spouse now speaketh of. The weaker sort might be afraid, lest Christ had altogether forsaken them, now they could not find him to helpe them, whom yet they hoped to be neer at hand in the bordering mountains, as is generally shewed in the last verse of the former Chapter. This calamity is declared

in

in seeking her beloved, which is first begun in her bed, in this *verse*. Now her bed is the Temple, as before *Chap.* 1.16. *Our bed is green*. This search was made in the night, namely when § true worship of God was much obscured, & altogether overwhelmed with night-like darkneſſe. The Church therefore complaineth it was ſuch a time, wherein true Religion was trodden down, ſo that Chriſt whom the faithfull thirſted for, was no where to be found in his true worſhip. Theſe things then belong to that deſolation which *Antiochus Epiphanes* brought upon them, who robbed the Temple, forbad ſacrifices, offered Swines fleſh in the Temple, conſtrained them to worſhip ſtrange gods, compelled them to leave circumciſing their children, burned their holy Books, and left no manner of wickedneſſe unattempted. This wofull ſpectacle *Daniel* did manifeſtly declare almoſt 300. years before, *Chap.* 8, 9, 10, &c. and 11, 28, 29, &c. And it is ſaid to be done, 1 *Maccab.* 1. from the 23. *verſe*, to the end of the Chapter. The Temple was not caſt down as by *Nebuchadnezzar*, but wofully deformed & ſhut up from the true worſhippers; whence ſhe ſaith, *She ſought him in the Bed, but found him not*. The Bed remained empty and Chriſt was gone.

Verſ. 2. *I will riſe now, and go about the City, in the ſtreets and in the broad wayes: I will ſeek him whom my ſoul loveth, I ſought him, but I found him not.*

The ſecond ſearch which ſhewed that Chriſt was not only abſent from the Temple, but likewiſe was not to be found in the holy city. If every corner were ſought never ſo diligently, there could be found no footſtep of piety. The cruelty of *Antiochus* wrought this effect, who, after he had ſacked the city, burnt it with fire, overthrew the houſes and walls, carried away the women and children captives, guarded the upper city with murtherers, put the citizens to flight, & made the city an habitation of ſtrangers, &c. 1 *Maccab.* 1. 33, 34, 35, *and* 40. No marvell if among the dregs of ſuch moſt deſperately wicked men, her beloved could not be found. But what could be more elegantly ſpoken to foreſhew this deſolation of the city?

Verſ. 3. *The watchmen that go about the city found me, to whom I ſaid: Saw ye him whom my ſoul loveth?*

She ſeeking the city in vaine, lighteth on the watchmen, of whom ſhe enquireth of her beloved, ſaying, *Have ye ſeen him whom my ſoule loveth?* Shee ſtayes not till they examine her, but begins to queſtion them; The watchmen and keepers of the city, are the holy Prieſts, who (as much as they may) hold faſt and keep the truth in theſe dark times. And are ſaid to have found the Church wavering, being driven from her ſeats. The chiefe of theſe were *Mattathias* the father of the *Maccabees* and his ſons; who valiantly anſwered the Kings ſervant, requiring them to ſacrifice, *If all Nations fell away from the worſhip of their elders: yet he and his children and brethren would walk in the covenant of their elders, and not tranſgreſſe their worſhip to the right hand or to the left.* 1 *Macca.* 2. 19. 20. Such faithfull men then found the Church, which yet gave her no anſwer, they were ſo aſtoniſhed as their ſilence here declareth.

Verſ. 4. *It was but a little that I paſſed from them, but I found him whom my ſoul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go, untill I had brought him into my mothers houſe, and into the chamber of her that conceived me.*

Now ſhe departeth from the high prieſts and governours of the city, getting no comfort of them at that time, ſuffering with § reſt a common deſtruction. But going a little from thē, ſhe chanceth on him whom ſhee ſhould have: whereby is taught that the Church did not long lie in theſe miſeries, but was in ſhort time delivered from thoſe chaſtiſments. Neither was this comfort vain, but at length fully ſhewed by *Judas Maccabeus*. 1 *Mach.* 4. 47. In the 142. year of the reigne of the Greeks, *Antiochus* began to afflict *Judea*. In the three and forty year he ſpoiled the Temple. After two whole years he took away the daily ſacrifice and all divine worſhip for the time. 1 *Macca.* 1. 21. 30. 47 In the eight and fourtieth year the nineth moneth, were the holy houſes purged and divine worſhip reſtored again, 1 *Mach.* 4. 52, 53, &c. Now was her beloved found, and brought into the houſe of her mother. For we have him preſent with us, as long as we keep his publike worſhip, or as often as we recover it being loſt: wherein he hath promiſed to ſhew himſelf to his. Theſe darkneſſes for the time they laſted were very black, but not long. After 2300 dayes (limited by the Angel, *Dan.* 8. 14.) *The ſanctuary ſhall be purged*. Wherefore her beloved delayed not long to ayd her, but came ſwiftly from the *mountains of Bether*; whom the faithfull doubted to be farther off.

So theſe few verſes are an Epitome of the whole hiſtory of the *Maccabees*: and thoſe books a juſt commentary of this place. Now that ſhe would not let her beloved go till ſhe had brought him into her mothers chamber, thereby is ſignified (this darknes driven away) divine worſhip ſhould be no more interrupted, untill Chriſt came in the fleſh. The Church is ſaid to bring Chriſt into his chamber, becauſe he deſcended into it, & took our nature upon him for her ſake, for he is ſaid to do any thing, for whoſe cauſe it is done. Then from the time of the *Maccabees* to the comming of the *Meſſias*, the courſe of Religion was conſtant, which no common calamity interrupted. Not, but thoſe times were moſt corrupt.

But in the middeſt thereof, was free leave to worſhip God rightly, whereby the Church might nouriſh her faith, and might cheriſh her ſelf, with the ſweet familiar acquaintance of Chriſt.

Verſ. 5. *I charge you, O yee daughters of Ieruſalem, by the Roes, and by the Hindes of the field, that you ſtir not up, nor awake my love till he pleaſe.*

This verſe ſheweth that there ſhould be no great trouble in the Church from the time of the *Maccabees*, till the birth of Chriſt as was ſaid in the end of the former verſe. Now there ſhould be ſilence and a tolerable reſt, whereby the Saints might be defended (in their true ſtudies) from feare of their enemies which are here noted by *Roes and Hindes* of the field. For though they were come home, out of the enemies land and ſettled in their own proper ſeats: yet they found at home, all places full of enemies. Now the Romanes oppreſſed them, and *Herods* tyrany bridled them. Theſe wilde *Roes* cauſed Gods people to worſhip him more diligently, and to be the more carefull, leſt with any noiſe of apparent impiety (which onely diſturbeth our beloved from his reſt) ſhe ſhould loſe the enjoying of him howſoever.

Verſ. 6. *Who is this that cometh out of the wildernes like pillars of ſmoak, perfumed with myrrhe and frankincenſe with all powders of the merchant.*

Hitherto hath been ſhewed, the condition of the Church before the birth of Chriſt; Now what it ſhould be while he lived on the earth. This deſcription containeth a propheſie, eſpecially of things done from the conception of Chriſt untill thirty years of his age: when the beauty of the Church ſhould cauſe admiration in the beholders. Who is this? (ſay they) which ſeem to be § words of the legal Church, wondring at the excellnt ſmell of the new ſmoke ſtirred up. For at this time, the Church in outward form was twofold. The legall continued yet, and the *Evangelicall* was new begun. Her threefold propriety, was her admirable coming out of the deſart; her ſmoke enlarging and increaſe; and laſtly her ſweet ſmell. Shee came firſt out of the deſart, by the meſſage of the Angel to the virgine *Mary* living then in *Nazareth* of *Galilee*: a ſolitary place in reſpect of others more frequented. And divinely revealed to *Elizabeth* in the mountaines of *Iudea*: as ſhe teſtified when *Mary* came to ſee her. This report is compared to pillars of ſmoke, for as ſmoke goeth before the flame, breaking forth and ariſing up like branched pillars, yet quickly avoideth and vaniſheth in the air, how thick ſoever it were: So ſhall we finde this report and mens expectation thereof altogether like unto it. As by the propheſie

pheſie of *Zacharie, of raiſing up a horne of Salvation in the houſe of David.* Confirmed by myracles, aſwell of a Sonne born unto him in his old age, as of his ſpeech reſtored after ten moneths. What feare came upon all the inhabitants of the hill countrey? *Luke* 1.65,68,69,&c. This ſmoke ariſing in the wilderneſſe, how pleaſantly ſmelt it, to all the godly waiting for the conſolation of *Iſrael*, yet foulded up in ſuch thick obſcurity that men could not ſee the greateſt part of it, whither the thing ſo much deſired would tend. But afterward by the former, when the ſhepherds and the wiſe men came ſeeking for the new born King, all *Ieruſalem* was troubled *Luke* 2.18. *Mat.* 2.3. Then the branched ſmoke flew upward, breaking forth with ſuch force, by reaſon of the increaſed heat, that it aſcended like a Pillar, yet this ſmoake quickly vaniſhed. Not that the Church ever failed, but becauſe this rumour ceaſing, there was ſo deep a ſilence from that time untill the baptiſme of *Iohn*, as if all theſe things had vaniſhed into ſmoke. But who can declare how ſweet this rumour was to all the godly thirſting for the *Meſſias*? *Simeon* taking the childe in his Armes and praiſing God very joyfully, deſired to die, having obtained that which was moſt to be deſired in this life, *Luke* 2,29. And truly all *Myrrhe, Frankincenſe*, and all manner of perfumes are unſavory in reſpect of this ſweetneſſe. Thoſe things which hapned about the birth of Chriſt, could not more ſignificantly and briefly be declared.

Verſ. 7. *Behold his bed which is Solomons: threeſcore valiant men are about it, of the valiant of Iſrael.*

Here is deſcribed the proviſion of her beloved before the marriage, which is twofold. *A bed, and a chariot.* Of the bed is entreated in this verſe, and the next. (*His bed,*) ſaith ſhee, namely her beloveds, wherein he lay himſelfe alone. *Not a common bed*, ſuch as before, (*Our bed,*) *Chap.* 1.16. As alſo ſpeaking of her own bed, *Chap.* 3.1. Wherein her beloved was not found. This bed reſembles that of *Solomons*, for it was waited on with as ſtrong a guard, as we ſhall ſee in the verſe following.

Verſ. 8. *They all hold ſwords, being expert in war: every man hath his ſword upon his thigh, becauſe of feare in the night.*

Here the guard is deſcribed, to whom the watch and a cuſtody of this bed is committed. Their number and nature was expreſſed in the former verſe. Now their readineſſe, skill and diligence is ſhewed, together with the end of their watching in theſe words. Firſt, they are called ſword-men, ready and ſtrong-men, whoſe vertue feareth no danger. Secondly, they are expert in war; that is to ſay, old, hardy, skilfull ſouldiers: *every one* hath his ſword. Beds are appointed for reſt and ſleep, whereby a man for the time is deprived of his ſtrength, and all power to defend himſelf; wherefore Kings and Princes, to ſleep the more ſafely, ordained watch-men, ſuch as *Solomon* is here ſaid to have had. Which teacheth, that this beloved, all the time that he gave himſelf to reſt, was fenced with ſuch a guard, as could keep him ſafe from all feare in the night; that is, from all ſecret deceipts which the wicked could invent. This time of reſt, was the whole infancie of Chriſt, which maketh a man no leſſe able to avoyd dangers then the deepeſt ſleep that is. *Herod* making uſe of this night, endeavoured (moſt wickedly) his deſtruction: But the Angel (*one of the mighties of* Iſrael) warning *Ioſeph* to flie with the childe into *Egypt*, delivered him from the jawes of *Herod*, and the cruell ſlaughter of the *Bethlehemites*. Truly this bed was better guarded then *Solomons*.

Verſ. 9. *King* Solomon *made himſelfe a Chariot of the wood of* Lebanon.

Such was the bed: Now followeth a deſcription of the Chariot in this and the next verſe. The bed was enough to ſhew, what did belong to private uſe; but by this Chariot is declared with what Majeſty he would ſhew himſelfe to the multitude. The King made this Chariot for himſelf alone, although the dignity thereof belongeth to the Spouſe alſo. The generall matter of it, is wood of *Lebanon*, whereof likewiſe the Temple was built, 1 *King.* 5.6. Other things that concern the beauty of it, are mentioned in the verſe follwing, where ye ſhall ſee the application of the Prophecy.

Verſ. 10. *He made the Pillars thereof of ſilver, the bottome thereof of Gold, the covering of it of purple, the midſt thereof being paved with love, for the daughters of* Ieruſalem.

Such was *Solomons* ſtately Chariot, wherein he was wont to bee carried in publique, whoſe beautifull and glorious ſtructure is here declared, to expreſſe that high and incomprehenſible excellency of Chriſts humane nature; for this was that triumphal Chariot which he built for himſelf of the wood *Lebanon*, cõceived in the womb of *Mary* of *Nazareth* of *Galilee*, at the foot of *Lebanon*; that rightly the matter may be ſaid to be taken from thence, whence his humanity was built up, or framed, yet he made this Chariot for himſelf, not begotten by the company of man, but by vertue of the moſt High overſhadowing the Virgin. Whoſe pillars were ſilver, the ſeats were gold, the coverings purple; all the frame from head to foot, moſt pure, moſt precious, moſt divine, and within the ground and pavement, and that which was (as it were) the foundation to all the reſt of the frame, was wholly love of the daughters of *Ieruſalem*: he had them drawn with the needle, or rather ingraven in his heart and bowels; ſeeing for his elects ſake onely, he made him this Chariot of humanity, wherein he would openly be carried in the ſight of the world for men to behold him.

Verſ. 11. *Go forth, O ye daughters of* Sion, *and behold King* Solomon *with the Crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his eſpouſals, and in the day of the gladneſſe of his heart.*

It ſeemeth here, it was the cuſtome for parents at ſuch a ſolemnity, to beſtow ſome ſingular ornament upon their children; and that *Bathſheba* beſtowed this Crown on *Solomon*, when he married *Pharaohs* daughter, (though the Scripture ſpeak not of it) for *David* was dead before; But it ſhall better appeare in the new *Solomon*, then in the Type: For the Crown which the daughters of *Sion* are commanded to behold, is that great glory which the Father gave the Sonne, entring into his office, teſtifying from heaven, This was that his *beloved Sonne, in whom he was well pleaſed.* And likewiſe annoynting him above his fellows by the Spirit, himſelf deſcending in a viſible ſhape, and reſting on him, *Mat.* 3.16,17. The Church (whoſe husband he is, and by ſome reaſon her ſonne, as we have ſeen before) put this Crown on his head, by knowledging him to be King and Head of the Church. The Son of God, the Lambe which took away the ſins of the world; the *Meſſias* himſelf, who had all power in heaven and in earth; and whom the faithfull ſought, and obtained of him, to be diſpoſſeſſed of devils, healed of diſeaſes, and a remedy in all their troubles. It was manifeſt what opinion they held of him, and of what incomprehenſible Majeſty indeed he was. All the time from the beginning of his office, untill his paſſion, was the day of his eſpouſalls or marriage, as he hath taught himſelf, calling his Diſciples the children of the wedding chamber, and himſelfe the Bridegroome, *Matth.* 9.15. and by the Parable of a certain King, which made *a Marriage for his ſonne*, Mat. 22.2, &c. This was the day of the gladneſſe of his heart, when with a ready and willing mind he earneſtly indeavoured to effect all thoſe things which belong to our ſalvation; that he preferred the care thereof before meat, and all other neceſſaries of his life, *Iohn* 4 32. The daughters of *Ieruſalem* ſhould not be moved with this glory, but onely the daughters of *Sion*, the Citizens and free Denizens of the City of the heavenly *Ieruſalem*; theſe moved with the divine beauty and excellency of this King and Crown, ſhould flock unto him every where by heaps, making the hypocrites afraid, leſt all men ſhould believe in him. *Iohn* 11.48.

CHAP. IIII.

1 BEhold, thou art fair my love: behold, thou art fair: thine eyes *are like* the doves; among thy locks thine hair is like the flock of goats, which look down from the mountain of Gilead.

2 Thy teeth *are* like a flock of *sheep* in good order, which go up from the washing: which every one bring out twins, and none is barren among them.

3 Thy lips are like a thread of skarlet, and thy talke is comely: thy temples *are* within thy locks as a piece of a pomegranate.

4 Thy neck is as the towre of David, built for defence: a thousand shields hang therein, *and* all the targets of the strong men.

5 Thy two breasts *are* as two young roes that are twins, feeding among the lillies.

6 Until the day break, and the shadowes flee away, I will go into the mountain of myrrhe, and to the mountain of incense.

7 Thou art all fair, my love, and there is no spot in thee.

8 Come with me from Lebanon, *my* spouse, *even* with me from Lebanon, *and* look from the top of Amanah, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the dens of the lions, *and* from the mountains of the leopards.

9 My sister, *my* spouse, thou hast wounded mine heart, thou hast wounded mine heart with one of thine eyes, *and* with the chain of thy neck.

10 My sister, *my* spouse, how fair is thy love! how much better is thy love then wine, and the savour of thine oyntments then all spices!

11 Thy lips, *my* spouse, drop *as* honey combs: honey and milk are under thy tongue, and the savour of they garment *is* as the savour of Lebanon.

12 My sister, *my* spouse *is as* a garden inclosed, as a spring shut up, *and* a fountain sealed up.

13 Thy plants *are as* an orchard of pomegranates, with sweet fruits, *as* camphire, spikenard,

14 *Even* Spikenard, and saffron, calamus, and cinamon, with all the trees of incense, myrrhe, and aloes, with all the chief spices.

15 O fountaine of the gardens, O well of living waters, and the springs of Lebanon.

16 Arise, O North, and come, O South, *and* blow on my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out: let my welbeloved come to his garden, and eat his pleasant fruit.

The Resolution.

WEe saw in the end of the former Chapter, *how the Bridegroome was adorned in the solemnization of his marriage: Now the beauty of the Spouse is shewed by her* Eyes, Teeth, Lips, Temples, Neck, Breasts, *vers.*1.2.3.4.5. *The praise whereof at length is stayed by passing to a greater perfection*, Vers. 6. *And hitherto of the legall Church and the Evangelicall: the beginning of one joyned to the end of the other. Now of the Evangelicall Church, full and perfect, what a one it should be after our redemption, by the death of Christ and his resurrection. Of this Church, in the rest of the* Canticles, *is a double description; divided and conjoyned. The first, considereth the peculiar and different Churches which should be upon earth, till the second coming of Christ; which, for the more plainnesse, we call them sisters: the one elder, the rest younger sisters: Wee call her elder and first begotten, which was conceived and brought forth in the Disciples, whom Christ collected, which forthwith after his resurrection, increased wonderfully, and is yet growing in this our time: The younger shall spring up in the last age of the world, which we yet expect. The eldest is described in a diverse fortune,* flourishing, decayed, and restored: Flourishing, *Vers.*7.8.9.10.11. Decayed, *partly inclining to ruine, in the rest of this* Chapter; *partly lying dead, in the whole fifth* Chapter: *and* restored *at length, in the beginning of the sixth.*

THE EXPOSITION.

Vers.1. *Behold, thou art fair my Love, behold, thou are fair: thou hast Doves eyes within thy lockes, thy hair is as a flock of Goates that appear from Mount Gilead.*

IN the last verse of the former Chapter was taught how the solemnity of the Marriage began. Now the Bridegroome in his own words sheweth how the Bride was adorned. All which is but to let us see the state and condition of the Church which Christ himself chose present here in earth: whose first arising was like a pillar of smoak; but after he began his office, he came forth in a most divine glorious shew, as sliding from heaven. She is first commended for her eyes, by the sight whereof, is often understood *Iudgement*, and *Understanding*: for the which she was commended by Christ himself, who published those eyes blessed, that saw the things which the Bride then saw, *Luke* 10.23. He also gave thanks to his Father, that hee had hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them to Babes, *Luke* 10.21. Her eyes were *Doves eyes*, that is, chaste & shamefast, looking only on her own Husband, as appeared by the words of *Peter* himself (when others fell away) declared, he knew not whither else to go, *Iohn* 6.68. yet though these eyes were cleer, they were within her locks, that is, they were so covered with haire, that the brightnesse thereof was somewhat hindred: the multitude of the faithfull being contemned and despised. This Dove-like chastity of the *Bride* was so covered, that she seemed a disorderly company to the proud Pharises: *Do any of the Elders, or of the Pharises believe on him? but this common people which know not the law are accursed*, Ioh.7.48.49. Yet this sight was not so sharp at first, but grew by degrees, it was alwayes pure and true, but small in the beginning: They were ignorant of the death of Christ, much more of his resurrection; his doctrine also was oftentimes, little understood: *Are yee not without understanding?* Mat.15.26 Neitherdoth he upbraid thē only that once with ignorance & dulnesse, their haire scatteringly and disorderly hanging, hindred their sight. Her second praise is of the haire it self, that she might not be thought deformed by it. Now this haire betokeneth the whole multitude of the faithfull of those times, fitly set forth by their number: her comparison to a flock of goates, may be understood (if I be not deceived) partly of that which goeth before, and partly of that which followeth.

Before, the godly *Israelites* scattered through the ten tribes

are called Goates. *Chap.* 1.8. Whose flocks are said to be lesse and thinner, because they scatter themselves and keep not together as sheep do. As *Varro* saith in his second book of husbandry. Christ indeed had many hearers, but few amongst them which truely beleeved: of many called few were chosen. The head whereon the faithfull depend is Christ, which was, thought then to be with as great danger, as the Goates hang on the sides of *Mount Gilead*, or any other steep hill or rock. *If any did confesse him to be Christ, he should be cast out of the Synagogue*, *John* 9.22. Therefore *Nicodemus* durst not be seen in this mountain of *Gilead* in the day time. Such was the condition of the Church at that time, her pietie quick of understanding and chaste, but covered with hair, and hid from the world, not having yet obtained ripenesse, it was yet thinne and reproachfull, not daring to joyn together without great danger.

Vers. 2. *Thy teeth are like a flocke of sheep that are even shorne, which come up from the washing: whereof every one bear twinnes and none is barren amongst them.*

These teeth (compared to a flock of sheep) are the disciples of Christ, whom he appointed as faithfull and wise disposers to give every one of his houshold their allowance in due season, *Luk.* 12.41. They must also be strong, and of a kinde of bonie nature, to whom the care was committed of preparing, and as it were, chewing meat for others the better to digest it. These sheep are even, like the Cherubims, 1 *King.* 6.25. If it be asked why Christ sent his twelve Apostles two and two to preach, instructed all with like power, of teaching, of working miracles, &c. *Mark.* 6.7. It was because he would truly set before us the two golden cherubims, just of the same length, breadth, and largenesse of every part equally. So that *Peter* was not more excellent then the rest, but there was one commune administration, one authority, one jurisdiction; And the same measure had the 70. Disciples afterwards, both among themselves, and among the twelve, whom he also sent out two and two, with the very same Laws and commandments which the former had, *Luk.* 10.1. The disciples came up from the washing, instructed by baptisme: cleansed from all filthines of sin by faith in Christ. Lastly, their fruitfulnesse is declared by *every one bearing twinnes, and none barren among them.* This belongeth to the fruit which followed their preaching: for the disciples having performed their message, returned with joy, because the devils were subject to them by that name which they declared. But Christ sheweth them of a larger fruit which they durst not hope for. I saw (saith he) *Satan as it were lightning falling down from heaven.* As if by some violence (at the voice of the Gospel) he had been driven out of his Kingdom, *Luke* 10 18.

Vers 3. *Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet, and thy speech is comely: Thy temples are like a peece of a Pomegranate within thy locks.*

The lips figuratively do signifie speech, whose praise is two-fold: slendernes and colour. As small as a thread, and as red as scarlet, which two shew the Doctrine of those times. As in form it was most pure, sincere, and most divine, and therefore compared to a small silk thread: So the matter in a speciall manner setting forth his death is compared to scarlet. Who would not kisse & reverence those lips, which spake not of the earth, but of heaven from whence they came? *Iohn* 3. 31.32. Blessed were those times which sounded with the voice of God himself: when all his words were dipped in scarlet, and all his doctrine as it were coloured with blood, by often mentioning of his sufferings, *Mat.* 16.21. &c. But these you will say) are the lips of Christ himself and not of the Church. He is the head of this body, and therefore the Church then spake with his lips. *He that heareth you, heareth me: and he that despiseth you, despiseth me: and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me*, *Luke* 10.16. [*And thy speech is comely*] This some translate, Thy solitarines is to be desired, for the word in the originall signifieth both, which word it seemeth he wise *Salomon* useth advisedly, to signifie both, for though his words seemed harsh to the Scribes & Pharisees, as coming out of a desert, stopping their ears at his words, like the deafe adder, as it was foretold, *Psal.* 58.5. &c. yet their servants confessed, *that never man spake like him. Iohn* 7.46. No marvell then, though the godly hearers were so taken with his words, that they oftentimes forgat to provide things necessary for themselves, *Mark.* 6.36. Hitherto of the speech, now followeth, of the *Temples like a peece of a Pomegranate within her Locks.* The Temples are that part of the head which extendeth it self from either part of the forehead, between the eyes and the ears, even to the crown of the head, and being next unto the head, and placed above the eyes, teeth and lips, they seem to signifie those which are appointed to be Ecclesiasticall governours in the Church, which should refresh the flock with sweet and pleasant juice, distilling from them with a fragrant smell like a piece of a *Pomgranate.* Notwithstanding, the Church in those dayes lived contemptuously in the sight of the world, and as it were, hid & covered, as the temples are with locks of hair.

Vers. 4. *Thy neck is like the toure of David, built for an Armory, whereon there hang a thousand Bucklers, all shields of mighty men.*

So were the lips and the temples: Now the neck is compared to the tower of *David.* This tower seems to be that in *Nehemiah*, Chap. 3.19 25.26. which is called, *The Armory of the corner*: The neck is that bond wherewith ỹ head is joyned to the body. Now that bond whereby Christ is joyned to the Church, is partly of the Spirit, partly of the Humanity received, *Ephes.* 2.21.22. *and* 4.16. *and* 5.30. The spirituall is common to all things. The other then first began, when putting on our nature he lived here on earth, which seemeth best to agree with the *Metaphor* in this place. The beauty of this neck is set forth as well in regard of the end, as of the use. The end, that it should be as a tower, built to hang swords in, that kinde of weapons wherewith enemies are beaten and vanquished. The use, that it might be an Armory for all mighty men. As concerning the first, He therefore took our humanity, that the world, the law, sinne, the devill, hell, and all the crue that fight against our salvation might be overcome and conquered. *Be of good cheer* (saith Christ) *I have overcome the world, Ioh.* 16.33. The devill was foyled in many combates, while the only begotten lived in our frailty, he brought many large spoyles into this Armory, immortall publishers of his divine vertue: But this true *Samp*son, by his death overcame his enemies, he consecrated the sword of *Goliah* to the Lord, and overspread and covered this whole Tower with spoyles. In this triumphant Chariot he spoyled principalities and powers, &c. *Col.* 2.14.15. These were the chains and collars wherewith the neck of the Church was adorned in those dayes. The use of this Tower is that, *here should hang a thousand Bucklers, and all Shields of the mighty.* These Armes are of that kinde wherewith every one is covered and defended. All the ancient mighty ones, which from the beginning of the world have triumphed over sinne and death, have been abundantly supplyed with weapons out of this Armory, which was only faith in Christ, as it is plain, *Hebr.* 11. through the whole *Chap.*

Vers. 5. *Thy two breasts are like two young Roes, that are twins which feed among the Lillies.*

These two breasts are the Apostles and Disciples, which Christ sent before him into every City and place whither he himself would come. They were of a low condition and simple at first, like young Roes new yeaned, called from their nets to the office of teaching. They were twins sent forth two and two, all a like in disposition and manners, many in persons one in doctrine: see before, *verse* 2. They spread abroad the knowledge of salvation through the whole Country, as swiftly as the Roes are wont to run over the hills. It was but a little time that they spent in their legacie, yet left they nothing

thing undone which was given them in command. If you ask how these breasts were supplyed with milk, which they should yeeld to others, *The young Roes feed among the Lillies.* In the company of the Elect, which smell most sweetly and pleasantly in Christ, (for such are the Lillies afterward, *Chap.* 6. 1.) they drew abundantly which they taught to others: These things shall suffice to declare the conditions of those times.

Vers. 6. *Untill the day break, and the shadowes flie away: I will get me to the mountain of myrrhe, and to the hill of frankincense.*

Here is § same time repeated which was spoke of, *Chap.* 2. 17. The *Ienes* interpret this *mountain of myrrhe*, the *mountain of Moriah*, where *Isaac* was bound to be sacrified, *Gen.* 22. 2. and whereon the Temple was built, in the place § *David* had prepared in the threshing floore of *Ornan* the *Iebusite*, 2 *Chr.* 3. 1. Also in these few words is comprehended that whole History from *Mat.* 16. 21. unto the end of that Gospel. Neither are these words (*I will get me*) without *Emphasis*: for thereby is shewed, that Christ ascended into this mountain of his own accord, not drawn thither by force of enemies, nor compelled by perswasion of friends, for they rather exhorted him to favour himself, *Mat.* 16. 22. and were moved with great grief at the mentioning of his death, *Iohn* 16. 6. This *Hill of Frankincense* was *Mount Golgotha*, whereon that only sacrifice was offered to God the Father by Christ the Sonne, whereby hee is reconciled to the Elect for ever, *Mark* 15. 22. Here was the sword of that triumphant Emperor hung about the necke of the Church, wherewithall our deadly enemies were slain at once. Now we see how this skilfull craftsman hath painted out the state of the Church of so long a-- his time, with more then mortall wit, describing the ornaments of her flourishing estate, comforting the calamities of her afflicted estate, and sweetly rejoycing at the felicity of her estate restored. With how divine words hath he comprehended the birth, infancy, office and death of Christ? Here is the last end of the old Church, and the beginning of the new: For the death of Christ brought that midday, wherein the old shadowes utterly vanished, never to returne again.

Verse 7. *Thou art all faire my love, there is no spot in thee.*

So far of the Legall Church. Now of the Christian Church only as it was at Christs resurrection, (*A. D.* 34) and from thence hath increased unto this day, the flourishing condition whereof is declared in these five next verses: for Christ departing into the hill of Frankincense by his death and buriall, was not long absent, but rose early the third day by power of the Spirit, and returned to his own, with whom he conversed 40. dayes, shewing them all things which belong to the Kingdome of God: making, and acknowledging the Church by his instruction; sound, perfect and absolute. She was never all faire till now, she was many times before commended for her beauty, and by the divine mercy, wherein the Father beholdeth her in the Son, she is alwaies glorious, *Ephes* 5. 26. 27. *Sanctified and cleansed with the washing of water, by the Word.* But now she was in her most pure and flourishing estate, *Not having spot or wrinckle, or any such thing, but holy and unblameable.* Now she obeyed Christ onely, adding nothing of her owne, neither changing, or omitting any of those things which he required to be done and observed. This perfection lasted the first 300. yeares: though somewhat declining towards the end, yet tollerable all that space, without any great spot of deformity.

Vers. 8. *Come with me from Lebanon (my Spouse) with me from Lebanon, looke from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon: from the Lions Dens, from the mountaines of the Leopards.*

The meaning of this verse will be the better understood if we first run over the words. *Lebanon* is a famous hill on the North borders of the Land of *Israel*. *Amanus* far more Northerly, toward the West of *Syria*, being a parcell of the *Mount Taurus*, and stretching to the River *Ifficus*, from whence one may behold *Syria*, *Mesopotamia*, *Cilicia*, and all the lesser *Asia*. *Shenir* and *Hermon* are two hills on the East side, *Deut.* 3. 9. These hills are called *Lyons dens*, and *mountains of Leopards*, not so much because wilde beasts did live in them, but rather men of fierce and cruel dispositions, Heathen Idolaters, void of all knowledge and fear of God. This inviting then, whereby the Bridegroome soliciteth his spouse to look down upon him from these mountains, teacheth the propagation of the gospel after Christs resurrection, whereby the fierce and cruell nations should be admitted into the Church of God. *Now the woolf should dwell with the Lamb, &c. Isa.* 11. 6. The Church was before shut up in the narrow bounds of *Iudea*; The doctors were breasts indeed, but they yeelded milk only to the *Israelites*, they were dry to strangers. Now the Jewes and Gentiles should draw together of the same fountain, so that by Christ *both had an accesse by one Spirit unto the Father, Eph.* 2. 18. Christ led his spouse as it were by the hand from *Lebanon*, and the other mountains, when the brethren dispersed by persecution, preached Christ first to Grecians, *Act.* 8. 1. *and* 11. 20. At that time he was preached to the *Samaritans*, the *Eunuch* was baptized, and *Peter* warned by a vision to call nothing common, or unclean, *Act.* 10. 15. This joyfull message went all the world over, but the first report of it flew towards the north and East. *Philip* (the Spirit commanding him) went neer unto *Gaza*, but straigheways returned from thence to *Azotus*, *Acts* 8.

Vers. 9. *Thou hast ravished my heart (my sister, my spouse) thou hast ravished my heart, with one of thine eyes, with one chaine of thy neck.*

This eye and chaine are the Church of *Antioch*, enclosed with the *mountains Amana and Lebanon*: who by the labour and diligence of *Paul* and *Barnabas*; and the working of the Spirit, the Bridegroom was with good cause ravished with this eye which shined with so great light, yet the beautie thereof chiefly glistered, when some contending to have the Law joyned with Christ, this Church withstood them, and by *Barnabas* and *Paul* in the Synod of the Apostles at *Ierusalem*, maintained faith only in Christ sufficient to salvation, *Act.* 15. And then was the chaine hung about her neck, when she was first called a Christian, *Act.* 11. 26. The humanitie of Christ was before the neck of the Church, now the name of Christ is the chaine of that neck. And being a Gentile, yet is now a sister to the Jewish Church. And to shew that she is as dear to him as the Jewish, He calleth her also his spouse.

Vers. 10. *How fair is thy love (my sister, my spouse) how much better is thy love then wine, and the smell of thine oyntments then all spices!*

Love is taken figuratively for the effects whereby it is shewed. Oyntments are gifts of grace, which the Father bestoweth on the Church for the Sons sake, he acknowledged her love before this time, yet now (in the space remaining of the flourishing Church) in this, & the next verse, she sheweth most apparent arguments of highest and most unfained love. For love that cannot be withdrawn by adversity is ever most precious and pleasant. But no times yeelded more matter of triall of constancy, then those (*An. D.* 60. *&c.*) of *Nero*, *Domitian*, *Traiane*, & the other Romane tyrants, who left nothing unattempted, that either hatred of the truth might yeeld thē, or power might perform, whereby the Christian name might be altogether extinct. But it was wonderfull, how the tyrants were wearied with killing, and the Christians incouraged in dying. So that it was no marvell, if (these boxes being broken) the smell of the oyntments most pleasantly spread it self farre and wide. The ten books of *Eusebius* his Ecclesiasticall history are full Commentaries of this and the next verse.

Vers. 11. *Thy lips (O my spouse) drop as the honycomb: Hony and milke are under thy tongue: and the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon.*

The honycomb of the lips is sweetnesse of speech. Hony and milk, pleasantnes of Doctrine; milk is chief among those things that nourish, and hony in the faculty of preserving. The garments are chiefly the covering of Christs righteousnes, with which only the nakednes of the Saints is covered, that they dare appear in the sight of God; the hem of which garment is outward honesty, and soundnes of manners and discipline. The *mount Lebanon* reaching many miles, set full of cedars and other sweet smelling trees, yeelded such a strong fragrant smell, that no ill savour whatsoever could take away the sweet perfume thereof. So in this Church faith imbracing the righteousnesse of Christ, and holines of life, breathed forth such a sweet smell, that he which would endeavour to quench that, should be lesse able to do it then to exceed all the odoriferous perfumes of *Lebanon* joyned together by a greater smell. Wherefore that we may see the application: first we know that the Greek eloquence now chiefly attended on the truth, for God raised up *Dionisius* the *Areopagite*, *Quadratus*, *Aristides* the *Athenian*, *Dionisius* of *Corinth*, *Melito*, *Apollinarius*, *Polycarpus*, and many other eloquent men, by whose pleasant Orations the Lips of the Spouse dropt like a Hony-comb, and her tongue flowed with profitable speech as with a most pleasant fountain of milk. Then concerning the smell of her garments; no times were ever more fruitfull of Heretickes, which laboured with their filthy comments, to take away the most divine savour of truth, and bring it to nothing. But this sweetnes of *Lebanon* could not be overcome. But the smell of her garments was afterward weakned, therefore no marvell if filthy errours prevailed. The holines of the Church was testified as well by enemies (such as was *Pline* the second, *Eusebius lib. 3. chap. 33.*) as by friends, *Iustine*, *Tertullian*, and *Cyprian*, which marvellously set forth the sweetnesse of her garments. This dignity continued in some measure, untill the time of *Diocletian* the Emperour. Indeed the truth and regard of manners and honesty by little and little began to decay, pride privily creeping in; yet the smell of the garments for the first 300. yeares remained sound and uncorrupted, without any notable change as the Spirit foretold it.

Vers. 12. *A Garden inclosed is my sister, my Spouse, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.*

Ye have heard how the Church in her flourishing estate was all fair: Now followeth her declining Condition, and first how she ran to ruine, threatning a fall, before she fell away altogether. In this verse is propounded her double estate, one in respect of strangers, the other in regard of her own household. As to strangers, it is *a garden inclosed*: To her own, *A spring shut up, a fountain sealed*. The Church is often compared to a Vine, her safety (wherewith God vouchsafeth to defend her from the rage of her enemies) to a Wall, a Hedge or Inclosure, as *Psalm* 80.8.12. and *Isa.* 5.1.2. But now the Church was void of such defence for three hundred years. Fortified by no power of Princes, or authority of Magistrates, or any Ordinance of Lawes. Yet at length God stirred up *Constantine* the Great, who fenced this Garden with a wall, rooting out the Tyrants, and restraining all hostility that might disturbe the peace, and quietnesse of the Church. And not onely freed her from the power of her enemies, but confirmed her liberty by Laws and Ordinances, and also advanced her to great honour and dignity, *Euseb. lib. 2.* Now the Garden was inclosed and fenced from the invasion of all her enemies. But what was she then in respect of her own household? *A spring shut up, a fountain sealed*. From common Theeves, we defend our fortunes with walles and houses; from private theeves, which live with us in the same houses, we keep our goods in Chests with lockes. Therefore the fountain sealed sheweth, that all had not leave to draw and to drinke, which lived within the inclosure of the Garden: for seeing the fountain and spring yeeldeth lively juice to hearbes and trees, many which had room appointed them in the Garden, wanted this wholesome watering of true life. Which altogether agreeth with that in the *Revelation*, *Chapter* 7. 2. 3. *and* 11. 2, *&c. and* 12. 6. The fountain was sealed to many given over into a reprobate sense to imbrace *Arianisme*, and others given wholly to superstitions newly sprung up, wherewith miserable men were so blinded, that they had no more power to come to this spring of salvation, then if they had bin shut out with barres and bolts. Now was the glory of the Church much dimmished, which of late was all faire.

Vers. 13. *Thy plants are an Orchard of Pomegranats with pleasant fruits, Camphire with Spiknard,*

Vers. 14. *Spiknard and Saffron, Calamus and Cynamon, with all trees of Frankincense, Myrrhe and Aloes, with all the chiefe Spices.*

This description is according to the proprieties which are wont to be seen in a pleasant Garden or Orchard. First well fenced, and after set with choice trees, then watered plentifully with sweete water, fourthly placed in a fresh ayre, and lastly, fruitfull and profitable. In the former verse we have the fencing: Now behold the planting which consists of two sorts of Trees: some for fruit, some only for pleasure. The one plainly shewed in the first words, *an Orchard of Pomegranates*, the other in the words following, *with pleasant fruits*. As there are two sorts of Trees: so are there two orders of the Members in the Church; one publike, the other private. The *Pomegranates* signifie those which labour in the word and doctrine, or in the politike government of the Church. The pleasant fruits are the Christian Congregations, ready to obey their Governours, which though they are not to be compared to the fruit Trees, yet by reason of their obedience and consent, they much adorne this Orchard. Of these pleasant fruits there are two sorts, some more common, as *Camphire*, or *Cypres*, and *Spiknard*, some more scarce, as *Spiknard* and *Saffron*, *&c. Vers.* 14. The more vulgar shew the unlike measure of gifts, wherein all are not the eye, nor all the eare, as the Apostle speaketh: but indued with great variety of graces profitable to the perfecting of the body of Christ, 1 *Cor.* 12. 4. 5, *&c.* The more scarce are of three sorts (for the divers degrees of private men) Hearbs, Shrubs, and Trees, all of sweete and pleasant perfumes: which sheweth that the Christians inclosed within the compasse of this fenced Garden abounded in graces, aswell the lowest and the midlemost as the highest, every one in their severall degrees. The ornaments which *Constantine* bestowed upon the Church, as Riches, Honour, Immunities, magnificent buildings of Temples, and the like, were meere delights, like an Orchard set with *Pomegranate* plants. The trees and fruit here mentioned seem to signifie those countries where they grew, to bee first inclosed within this Fence. As by *Pomegranates*, *Charthage*, and other places in *Africa*; *Camphire* and *Spiknard* our *European* Nations. Neither was it rashly done to reckon these in the first place, for *Europe* was then the chiefe part of this garden, most famous for the multitude of the faithfull, and purity of the truth.

Vers. 15. *A fountain of Gardens, a well of living waters and streames from Lebanon.*

To the fencing and planting is added watering, without which the beauty of the garden would soon decay. The fountain is commended, because it is of Gardens, because it is *a well of living waters, and which flow from Lebanon*. He speaketh now of many gardens, because the garden is common, that is to say, one Church divided into many particular Congregations and Parishes, like beds or borders in a Garden. Now also it is called a Well, which of late was but a Fountain and spring, because it is digged deep against the heat of the Sun, for drying it up. Living waters, which flow continually and

and never faile: whose Spring the Church hath never wanted. Nay the Head it self of the fountain whence we all draw, and those most pure Conduit-pipes (the Apostles) which received the water flowing from the first Fountain, lived not long before. Now is mention first made of Living waters in regard of the Councell of *Nice*, of so many learned and Religious men out of all parts of the earth. By whom the rivers of living waters run into each part of the Church, much dryed up with the Arrian heat. *Constantine* himself was that *Lebanon* from whence these waters did flow. He called the Councell, maintained it at his own cost, & confirmed it by his authority.

Ver. 16. *Awake, O North-wind, and come thou South, blow upon my Garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his Garden, and eat his pleasant fruit.*

The first member of this verse seemeth to be the words of the Bride-groom for the Lord of the *Garden* speaketh saying, *Blow upon my Garden*: But the *Bride* is the Garden her self, and not the Mistresse of it: for inviting him into the Garden she truly and modestly confesseth it to be his, not hers; *Let my beloved* (saith she) *come into his Garden, &c.* Here is the temperature of the ayre added to the watering. Neither doth the Bridegroome intreat that a supply should be made from any but himself of that which should be fit for the garden: but to shew what ayre the Garden should use at those times. By the *North* and the *South*, are meant *Europe* and *Africk*, who stoutly defended the truth in those times, against the *Arrian* heresie. Lastly, of the fruit whereunto he is invited: for it is no idle invitation, only for fashions sake, but for great use, to expresse the codition of those times. *Let my love* (saith she) *come into his Garden, and eat his pleasant fruit*; which words, no doubt, are of the Spouse, giving the Garden to her beloved, not challenging it to her self, as is said before: for without doubt, she perceived that her beloved had withdrawn himself, otherwise, had the invitation been in vain. There was an excellent outward shew, but within, all things were defiled with Mosse and Rust, Envy, Brawlings, Contentions, Ambitions & Heresies had almost abolished true piety: so that the Church necessarily (leaving the multitude, who preferred a bare name only) lurked, as it were, in darknesse, with a few Citizens. This solitarinesse happened when the fountain was sealed, as is said at the 12 *verse*: for then many more were within the bounds of the Church, then had leave to drink of the Fountain. Then was the Dragon thrust out of heaven, and the woman fled into the Desert, as we have shewed in the *Revelation*. The meaning is, the Church much flourishing outwardly, Christ left her, void of true piety, as more plainly will appear by his answer in the next *verse*.

Vers. 17. *I am come into my Garden, my Sister, my Spouse. I have gathered my myrre with my spice: I have eaten my honey-comb with my hony; I have drunk my wine with my milk. Eat, O friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved: Or, and be drunken with loves.*

They commonly expound it, as if, yeelding to her request) he should say, Thou dost intreat me to come into the garden, Loe, I come, thou hast thy desire. But the History directeth us to another exposition, as if he should say, whereas thou desirest that I should come into the Garden, to what end should I come? my harvest and my vintage, and time of delights are past: I was there long since, and gathered my *myrrhe with my spice, &c.* I have laid up as much as I pleased, now nothing remaineth wherein I should take pleasure. Thus saith the Bridegroom. This harvest & vintage were presently at the fencing of the garden, assoon as *Constantine* obtained the Empire: for then the fruit (getting heat of the Sun) was quickly ripe; And the good Husbandman lost no opportunity, but gathered infinite store of all kinde of fruits while the time served. But after he departed from the Garden, he returned no more, till a thousand two hundred and threescore dayes were ended. *Revel.* 11. 3. For the Bridegroom must be so long absent, as the Bride hid her self. Therefore these words teach no short and swift return into the garden, but yeeld a reason why he was not in a long space to be expected. The second part of the answer belongeth to his fellowes or friends. *Eate* (saith he) *O friends, and be drunken with loves.* This word *be drunken*, is sometimes in Scripture taken for drinke abundantly, *Gen.* 43. 34. or sufficiently, but most commonly (in the worser part) for over much drinke, depriving the senses: These words very well expresse the state of those times, declaring those which boasted to be the Bridegroomes friends, to be puffed up with too much prosperity, most basely abusing it, giving themselves wholly to the throat and the belly as if they were out of their wits. So that whatsoever the godly Emperor gave for the comelinesse and commodity of the Church, they changed all to her shame and destruction. It is most pleasant to consider how expressly the Holy Ghost long before painted out these things, which at length should happen in the Church, the like whereof we see still continueth. And hitherto of the Church inclining to fall, it ceased to flourish, when the Bridegroom first departed the garden, and as soon as *Constantine* came to the Empire: As long as he lived she was in great glory, but presently after followed the darknesse.

CHAP. V.

I Am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I gathered my myrrhe with my spice: I ate mine honey combe with mine honey, I drank my wine with my milk: eat O friends, drink, and make you merry, O welbeloved.

2 I sleep, but mine heart waketh: *it is* the voice of my welbeloved that knocketh, *saying*, Open unto me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for mine head is full of dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.

3 I have put off my coat, how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them?

4 My welbeloved put in his hand by the hole *of the doore*, and mine heart was affectioned toward him.

5 I rose up to open to my welbeloved, and mine hands did drop down myrrhe, and my fingers pure myrrhe upon the handles of the bar.

6 I opened to my welbeloved: but my welbeloved was gone and past: mine heart was gone when he did speak: I sought him, but I could not finde him: I called him, but he answered me not.

7 The watchmen that went about the City, found me: they smote me *and* wounded me: the watchmen of the wals took away my vaile from me.

8 I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if you finde my welbeloved, that you tell him that I am sick of love.

9 O thou the faireſt among women, what is thy welbeloved more then *other* welbeloved? what is thy welbeloved more then *another* lover, that thou dost so charge us?

10 My welbeloved is white and ruddie, the chiefest of ten thousand.

11 His head *is as* fine gold, his locks curled, *and* black as a raven.

12 His eyes *are* like doves upon the rivers of the waters, which are washt with milke, *and* remaine by the full *vessels*.

13 His cheeks *are* as a bed of spices, *and as* sweet flowers:

and his lips *like* lillies dropping down pure myrrhe.

13 His hands *as* rings of gold set with the chrysolite: his belly like white yvory covered with saphirs.

14 His leggs *are as* pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold: his countenance as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars.

15 His mouth *is as* sweet things, and he is wholly delectable: this is my welbeloved, and this is my lover, O daughters of Jerusalem.

16 O the fairest among women, whither is thy welbeloved gone? whither is thy welbeloved turned aside, that we may seek him with thee?

The Resolution.

Hitherto of the Church declining and running to ruine. Now lying prostrate she is doubly described: First how she neglected her beloved calling her, vers. 1,2,3. *Then how she sought him in vaine being gone: the fruit thereof is shewed, both how she was used of the watchmen,* vers. 4, 5, 6. *and how of the daughters of Jerusalem, who kindled with her mervellous praises of him, promise their fellow-labour to seek him: in the rest of the Chapter.*

EXPOSITION.

Vers. 1 *I sleep, but my heart waketh, it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled; for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.*

THe negligence of the Church lying thus is declared; First by her drowsinesse, then by his enticing call, and lastly by the slight causes of her excuse. Sleep caused her outward senses to be benummed, that she neither regarded nor considered how superstitions arose; as it happened to the *Housholder, Mat.* 13.25. Neither could it be otherwise, (when the Bridegroome left the garden, and his friends or fellowes drunken with prosperity, wholly gaping after riches and honours, all common good despised) but sleep would overcome the Spouse, wherein outwardly she should not differ from a dead woman, howsoever the heart should move and live, the seed of faith not altogether quenched. This drowsinesse crept in, in the time of *Constantine*, when a gaping heavinesse with a continuall desire of sleeping, so oppressed the Spouse, that the sharpest sighted Pastors could not use their outward senses: not perceiving how ambition crept in among the Bishops; and not only that, but now they began to consecrate Temples to Saints, earnestly to seek their Reliques, to worship them with prayers; and to beleeve that prayers made in the honour of Saints at their Sepurchres did profit much. Who could now tell whether the Church were sleeping or waking? who neither loathed nor perceived such things. When *Constantine* was dead, Christ found the Church asleep, and sought by all means to stir her up, both by knocking and calling. He knocked by persecutions in the times of *Constance, Iulian* and *Valens*, of whom, though *Iulian* were a profest enemy. (*A. D.* 368.) yet the other two exceeded him in cruelty. After their tyrannous raigne, God stirred up *Valentinian* in the West parts, by whom Christ lovingly called his Spouse, that returning unto her former integrity she should open and let him in. Then taking away *Valens*, he called more earnestly at both doores (as it were) as well in the West, as in the East, by *Gratian* and *Theodosius* the elder: after by *Arcadius* and *Honorius*, then by *Theodosius* the younger and *Valentinian* the third. And lastly, (that there might be four pair as it were answerable to the foure voyces, *My Sister, my Love, my Dove, my undefiled one*) by *Marcian* alone in the East. These Emperours studied and laboured very religiously to defend and enlarge true Religion; but the Church was in all the fault, who having these helps prepared, would not use them to recover her former brightnesse. To this readines of the Emperours was added the voyce of the most excellent Bishops, and best learned men of that time: As *Basile, Gregory, Nazianzen, Ambrose, Hierome, Chrysostome, Augustine*, and other the lights of that time. But seeing his profession of love could nothing move her, he tryeth what his shutting out of the doores at night would doe. *My head* (saith he) *is filled with dew, and my lockes with the drops of the night.* The locks of haire signified before the congregation of the faithfull, among whom true Religion was now so much decayed by new and fooliſh Ceremonies, borrowed partly of the Jews and Gentiles, and partly invented of their own idle brains, that the grasse is scarce more covered with drops of dew in the night, then the Church was at that time with superstitions.

Vers. 2. *I have put off my coat, how should I put it on: I have washed my feet, how should I defile them?*

It was great negligence in the Spoute to give her self so much to sleep: but pardon her heavinesse. Why opened she not when he knockt and called? was she so buried in sleep that she heard him not? it is plainly seen, she answered him quickly. But was she so benummed that she could neither move hands nor feet? Neither was that the matter. But when she heard and might open, she made an idle excuse. *I have put off my coat* (saith she) *and washed my feet.* The coat is Christ and his only imputed righteousnesse; but as soon as we look on our selves and seek righteousnesse in the perfection of our own vertue, we spoil our selves of this garment, and our filthinesse appeareth presently to God and the Angels. And so we may wash our feet with other waters, that we may seem to our selves most clean. So much was the doctrine of free justification by Christ alone decayed at that time, and another mean of washing and purging the feet found out besides him: that no coming to Christ by faith alone, was commonly beleeved without danger of defiling, &c.

Vers. 3. *My beloved put his hand by the hole of the doore: and my bowels were moved for him.*

Here beginneth the second part of the chapter of seeking the Bridegroom, the degrees whereof are diverse, *the moving of her bowels, his withdrawing of himselfe, her opening the door, her enquiring, her crying out, and how the watchmen entertained her.* It is manifest by the first of these words that he loosed his hand from the hole of the door, whereby appeareth that he not only knocked and called, but also sought to put back the bolt, his hand was ready at the hole when the godly Emperors called sacred councels to pull up the tares which wicked idle men had sowen in the Lords field. It is excellent, how *Marcian* the Emperor in the conncell of *Chalcedon* exhorted the fathers oftentimes, to apply all their study to root out heresies and all wicked instructions, that the true and holy faith might arpeare, or shew it self. What might not the Bishops then have done, if they had known their opportunity? But one would have thought, it should have been their own chiefest care, without the Emperours admonition. The like pains took the two Emperours *Theodosius* the Nephew

phew, and the grand-father in those famous counsels of *Ephesus* and *Constantinople*: the Bridegroom did his part to take away the barre, but the Spouse would not: therefore he withdrew his hand, and took away all power to remove the bolt. For after *Marcian* was dead, such barbarous cruelty raged in the west; and obscuritie, sloth and covetousnesse raigned in the east, that he which before sought for entrance, was now no where to be found.

Vers. 4. *I rose to open to my beloved, and my hands dropped with myrrhe, and my fingers with sweet smelling myrrhe upon the handles of the lock, or bolt.*

After the Spouse (afflicted with dayly miseries) had learned how great losse her negligence had procured: she seeks now to recover it by diligence. And shaking off sloth, goes to the door, which endeavour of hers (*her fingers dropping with myrrhe*) proves to be to God most sweet and acceptable. The Spouse arose when *Leo Isaurus* raigned, who endeavoured to root out worshipping of images lately brought in, in the former ages. But *Constantine* his son (*A. D.* 755.) in the seventeenth councell of *Constantinople* (who soundly condemning that hainous abomination by the holy scriptures) set his hand to the bolt or lock that shut out Christ: which holy enterprise of his flowed with *myrrhe*. *Charles* the great assayed the like at *Frankford*, about fourty years after, 795. but that which was decreed in the councell wanted successe, for no reformation followed.

Vers. 5. *I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had withdrawn himself and was gone: my soul failed when he spake: I sought him, but I could not finde him, I called him, but he gave me no answer.*

She opened to her beloved, but he withdrew himself and was gone. Her soul failed when she remembred how lovingly he had called her. He sheweth himself to be present and seen of the Church in the worship by himself ordained. This prophesie agreeth with those times, when *Leo Isaurus*, *Constantine* his son, and *Leo Copronymus* endeavoured what they could to take away idolatry, to remove the bolt, and open the door to the beloved: but so great and such horrible corruption of all piety remained, that Christ could not be seen in his outward worship. The Emperors rightly did their duties to root out that which most manifestly appeared; but they past by many grosse errors untoucht. Whose contagion the Bridegroom flying withdrew himself so far off. They which were awaked out of this idolatry were inflamed with a marvellous desire of Christ: but it rather increased their griefe, then recovered their former happinesse.

Vers. 6. *The watchmen that went about the City found me: they smote me, they wounded me. The keepers of the walls took away my vaile from me.*

These watchmen differ much from those, *Chap.* 3. 3. who (it is like) knew whither the Bridegroom was gone, and might be found again; for she asketh them whether they saw him, but she saies nothing to these, assured of their ignorance, and would have been glad to have passed by them in safety. Likewise those former watchmen, though they could yeeld her no help, (saying in the same vessell) yet forbare to lay violent hands on her: but these beat and wound her, and reproachfully take away her vaile: who, though they be far unlike in courtesie, and humanity, yet their common name shews some agreement in Office. Wherefore they are Rulers and Governours, Emperours, Bishops, Prelats, and men of such rank, as the event plainly teacheth. For as soon as the truth began to appear: in how shamefull a manner was she received of the wicked world: and especially of those which would be accounted Watchmen of the City? She was smitten with reproaches, lyes, and cursings in the time of *Gregory* the second: by whom *Leo Isaurus* was excommunicated for putting down the worshipping of Images. But by the councell of *Nice* under *Constantine* (sonne of *Leo*) and *Irene* his mother, (by compulsion, or instigation of Pope *Adrian* and *Tarasius*, Bishop of *Constantinople*) (788) she was cruelly wounded. The watchmen within the City are the Ecclesiasticall Teachers and Rulers. The keepers of the wals, the civill Governours. But in the time of *Theodora*, the Empresse, and *Michael* her son, the vail was taken away; so that the Church had neither Priest nor Magistrate to defend her. These were the times wherein the Spouse kept her bed, and was never seen abroad by many years: the worst times that ever she indured. She was much troubled in mind (her heart failing her) in the Wine-cellar; as before, *Chap.* 2. 4, 5. yet then she was supplyed with Flagons, and Apples, nay, her beloved came quickly to her, and imbraced her (ready to fall) in both his armes: but here she is *smitten and wounded, her vaile taken away and laid for dead*: but no Flagons, or Apples, or hope of her beloveds coming: for no man durst speak or look freely to testifie his will, much lesse to reach out an helping hand to the truth lying prostrate. The common Harlot of *Rome* may then see how farre she is estranged from this Spouse, who boasteth so much of her visibility since her first beginning.

Vers. 7. *I charge you, O daughters of Ierusalem, if ye finde my beloved, that ye tell him that I am sick of love.*

If ye finde my beloved (saith she) *tell him* (do you ask what you shall tell him) *that I am sick of love.* After she had concealed her self a long time, at length (impatient of longer delay) she begins afresh to seek her beloved: she goes to the daughters of *Ierusalem*, her fellow Citizens, the Elect, and sheweth them of her grief, how she had sought him; and though she were without hope of finding him, yet if they chanced to light on him, they should bewaile before him the miserable fortune of his afflicted *Spouse*, that by their tears he might be the sooner moved to come speedily to her aide; which sheweth, that after long silence, some godly men should bewail the calamity of the times, & desire reformation, which was done about the year 1100. after all mention of the truth ceased, being altogether buried 260. years and more, since the vaile was taken away. For about that time a *Florentine* Bishop openly began to lament the Misery of the Church, and doubted not boldly to affirm, *Antichrist* to be come already. Also one *Arnold* a Romane could not hold, but with the losse of his head bewailed the grief of the *Spouse*.

And *Hildegarde* the Propheteesse, to whom the Church appeared in a vision, in the form of a woman wailing, her face sprinkled with dust by the Priests: her garments rent and torn: the innocent Lamb driven from her by their fault, and many the like. Adde unto these *Bernards* complaints upon the *Canticles*, and others. Afterwards there arose many, and more and more every day, which freely professed their grief. By whose tongues, the *Spouse* declared her misery to the daughters of *Ierusalem*.

Vers. 8. *What is thy beloved more then another beloved, O thou fairest among women? What is thy beloved more then another beloved, that thou dost so charge us?*

These daughters of *Ierusalem* were the friends of the *Spouse*. They call unto her familiarly and lovingly, and (better sighted then others) they acknowledge her most beautifull, being naked and compassed with darknesse. Yet were they altogether ignorant of her beloved, otherwise they would not have asked what he was. They shew great desire of knowledge, asking again and again to be shewed him. At the complaint of the godly doctors, the studies of the Elect were stirred up: so that he which promised onely the first lineaments of true piety and Religion, had great companies following him. See the multitude flocking to *Petrus Waldensis*, (about the year 1160) a private man, not graced with any ambitious title.

Vers. 9. *My beloved is white and ruddie, the cheefest among tenne thousand.*

She willingly yeeldeth to their desire, hoping to get what she sought for, the sooner by their means. The answer is threefold

threefold: *Common, speciall,* and *mixt,* Which seems to note out so many times, wherein there should be the like knowledge of Christ. *Common* in this verse, taken aswell from things inherent as from Circumstances. The things inherent declare the excellent sweetnesse of the lively colours of Christ, which concerns those times of the *Waldenses*, when the aforesaid *Peter* made his house as it were a Schoole of Sacred learning, where he taught the *Catechisme* and first rudiments of Religion; turned the Bible into their own language; translated some writings of the Fathers, and by his diligence and piety brought it to passe, that at length the beautifull colours of Christ shining with pure holinesse, and red with the merits of his death, might be seen of all men which did not wilfully shut their eyes. The circumstances are 10000. men attending on Christ. For when the truth was discovered by *Petrus Waldensis*, and his fellows, the Roman Antichrist seeking by all means to abolish the truth, spread it abroad unwittingly in many other places, whose fruitfulnesse was such, that about the year 1200. the *Albigenses* durst joyn battell with the Antichristian Bands, which *Innocent* the third sent to destroy them, under the leading of *Leopoldus* the sixth Duke of *Austria*: and *Simon* Earl of *Mountfort*. At length *Reymond Tolosanus*, and *Petrus* King of *Tarracon* came to aid the *Albigenses*. Then might yee see the Bridegroom begin to shew himself again to the world, attended with 10000. truly Crossbearing souldiers? Which had wandered many years before solitary and without company.

Vet. 11. *His head is as the most fine gold, his locks are bushie and black as a Raven.*

An other part of the knowledge of Christ more plain and evident then the former. For now the Daughters of *Jerusalem* learn of the *Spouse* the excellency of the principall members which the world knew not by many ages. *The head as the most fine gold,* (or, (as it is in the originall) gold of gold) signifieth as much as King of Kings, For all other wear Crowns of gold upon their heads, which with their Kingdoms may be taken away: but his head is as pure gold in selfe, because it is Eternall and Essentiall, which teacheth that Christ would now shew himself a King in the Earth. As it came to passe about the year 1216. in that long contention of *Frederick* the Emperour, the second of that name, with *Honorius* the third, *Gregory* the ninth, and *Innocent* the fourth, then presently after the *Albigensian* warre, that the Kingdome usurped of the Popes by Tyranny might be restored again to Christ, the right lord or true owner. The bushy locks are the multitude of the faithfull, very comely and beautifull in those times for their mutuall love and imbracing one of another, yet wanting the brightnesse of externall policy. The blackneſse of the hair betokeneth the Wars, troubles and persecutions of those times bewailed by many. As some of *Sweveland at Hallis, Robert Grostet* Bishop of *Lincolne, Matthew Paris, Guilielmus de Sancto Amore, Arnoldus de villa nova,* cryed out, that all Christian people by craft of the devill had gone astray from the truth of our Lord Jesus Christ, that the faith which the people commonly had, was like the faith of devils: and that all Christian people were led to hell. See how rightly they are compared to the colours of a Raven, they were so black and disordered. Neither did this deformity then first invade her, but then she began first to be acknowledged and bewailed.

Vers. 12. *His eies are as the eies of Doves by the rivers of water, washed with milk, and fitly set.*

Christ carefully looking on his spouse boweth down his head that he may behold her the more neerly and exactly. As the doves bow their necks with eyes inclining towards the water when they desire to quench their thirst. And where the spouse was deformed altogether with dust, he useth no sharp remedy, but applyeth much mercy and gentlenesse in cleansing her outward filthinesse. *His eyes are fitly set,* not overmuch standing out nor too much dipping in, but fitly placed to behold the whol condition of the Church. These eyes of the Bridegroom so delectable, were shewed to the world by *Michael Cesenas* and *Petrus de Carbaria* about the year 1277. together with *John de Poliaco*, all which Pope *John* condemned: Because first, they taught diligently, *that Peter was no more head of the Church then any of the other Apostles: neither did Christ leave after him any vicar or head of the Church.* Which evidently declareth the first part of the similitude, that Christ beholdeth his Church with no lesse attention, then the thirsty and drinking doves behold the waters with attentive eyes. Secondly, they taught plainly, that *The Church hath no power to correct any one with coactive punishment (as they call it) much lesse hath the Pope any such power to correct, punish, institute or remove any one in the magistracy.* Whereby they prove the *Pope* clean contrary to Christ: the one washeth away spots with milk, the other with salt-peter, the one restraineth & punisheth faults with the word, the other with the sword, &c.

Thirdly, they taught that *Priests and elders had all alike authority, power and jurisdiction: Emperors indeed had given a high degree to the Popes, and might take it away again at their pleasure.* The *Pope* raged when *Michael* taught this, but the holy man proceeded and ceased not to preach that *the Church was a striving place of pietie, not a race of Ambition. And seeing that full vessels might satisfie every one, it was terrible that the Clergie should so shamefully contend for honour either with the laitie or among themselves.* The covetous and ambitious haue never enough, but their minde alwayes thirsts for something more: whereby they plainly shew, that either they never lighted on that full river, where the Bridegroom quietly resteth, or they are of another disposition, contrary to him whose name they falsly pretend, &c.

Vers. 13. *His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers: his lips like lillies, dropping sweet smelling myrrhe.*

The greatest part of the countenance is in the cheeks, which of Christ are most apparent unto us, when he raigneth openly in the Church, in holy institutions, which he hath given to be kept by his *Church* till his coming. These cheeks are first likened to beds new made in a garden, and presently to sweet flowers, which elegantly setteth forth the swift and speedy increase of the knowledge of *Christ*: the flowers immediatly following the sowing. The fruitful ripening of this seed was furthered by the preaching of *Robert French, Anno* 1290. Who by many visions set forth the lamentable condition of the *Church*, and declared openly that *the Pope was an Idol, a Serpent, a wooden head.* And *the Spouse* which was presented unto him with a glittering silver crosse, very beautifull and excellent as well in life as doctrine. Hitherto the following member of the verse doth seem to belong. *His lips like lillies dropping sweet smelling Myrrhe.* Now the Bridegroom began to be famous by the purity of teaching, which yet durst not but only mutter and whisper without lifting up the voice boldly.

Vers. 14 *His hands are as gold rings set with the Beryll: his belly is as bright Ivory overlaid with Saphirs.*

Hitherto hath the Bridegroom been set forth to the world in some speciall members from *Frederick* the second to *Robertus Gallus* by almost 100. years. The hands are the instruments of Action, and in scripture they figuratively signifie works. The Gems included in the rings seem to signifie the ministers of the word, which elswhere *Christ* carrieth as stars in his right hand, *Rev.* 1.20. But these times yeelded not such splendour. These things shew a change and alteration of that which *Christ* would bring to passe by the labour of his ministers, as it hapned about the year 1300. which was called *the first resurrection of the dead.* For now the thousand years were ended wherein Satan was bound, & the dead raised from their graves. Very many now began more boldly to set forth the truth: As *Dant* the *Florentine, Marsilius Patavinus, William Ockam, John of Gaunt,* and many others. *Philip*, the *French* King, despised Pope *Boniface, Lewes* of *Bavaria*, strove long time

time with these most humble servants of servants for the right of the Empire. *Edward* of *England* made shew unto many, how little he esteemed the Popes authority. By the *Bowels* or *Belly*, bright as *Ivory*, *overlaid with Saphirs*, may be understood the two Sacraments. For the Word of God is open to the view of every one, as the mouth and countenance, neither is it wont to be hid from strangers: but the Sacraments serve only for the household, as the bowels, which are appointed only to that body whose members they are, but serve to no use for strangers. These things therefore, as it were, with the finger, point to those times of *John Wickliff*, (1370) who taught openly, *that the substance of materiall bread and wine remain in the Sacrament of the Altar: the accedents of bread remain not without the subject in the same Sacrament: Christ is not really in the Sacrament, in proper presence corporally*. *Beringarius* spake against this wicked error, 200 yeates before, but the time was not yet come, wherein *the hands of the Bridegroome should be seen full of Rings*, whence his enterprise wanted successe.

Vers. 15. *His legs are as pilars of Marble, set upon sockets of fine gold: his countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the Cedars.*

The beginning of this verse setteth forth the nether parts, whose chief praise consists in strength and stableness. All would faile, unless that which upholdeth were sufficient to beare the weight. Wherefore the Bridegroome standeth immoveable on such strong bases: And lest we should thinke that his strength wanteth beauty, loe, the legs and feet are of gold; So that from the crown of the head to the soal of the feet, hee shineth with infinite glory and Majesty. Yet is there no doubt, but these things belong also to the history: therefore these two golden bases, whereon the Marble pillars are set, seem to point out *Iohn Husse*, and *Hierome* of *Prague*; as is the perpetuity of Marble, such was their constancy to indure death willingly for the truths cause, induring a triall by fire, as the purest gold. They differed from the Popelings in many things: but this chiefly bit the mitred fathers, that they gravely reprehended their wicked and lascivious lives. This was the ulcer that could not iudure scratching, which made them rage so fiercely against them: this was about the year, 1415. The other Member of the verse, *his countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the Cedars*, His countenance is seen here on earth, in the true knowledge of Christ, and by his true worpship, which he himself hath appointed. Now the *Spouse*, comparing it to *Mount Lebanon*, sheweth thereby that there should be so great an increase of knowledge and renewed worship, that the profession of Christ should continue as firm as the hils themselves; and as the Cedars of *Lebanon* exceed other trees in length, so should true Religion excel all scraching and pricking superstitions in reverend Majesty, which most fitly agree with the times presently following, wherein the *Bohemians* shook off the Romish yoke, 1420. Now first began the Word to be truly preached, the Sacraments to be administred in either kinde, wicked superstitions to be rooted out, Monasteries to be beaten down, and the Priests constained to till the Land, or to yeeld some better fruit, &c.

Vers. 16. *His mouth is most sweet, yea, he is altogether lovely: This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Ierusalem.*

His lips (at the 12. verse) dropped *myrrhe*: here the mouth soundeth sweetly; both lips and mouth betoken the Word and Preaching, only the lips whisper obscurely: the palate and open mouth yeeld a more sounding voice. Such was the voice of the Bridegroome heard in the Ministers of *Bohemia* preaching the truth freely, and without feare, in despite of *Antichrist*. *Hee is altogether lovely*; there is nothing in him but that which is most to be desired, with greatest care and study. *This is my beloved*, as if she should say, seeing yee have so earnestly desired to know the excellencie of my beloved. Thinke with your selves, that I have not trifled, nor done any thing unfit for a modest woman, in that my earnest indeavour of seeking him, and of charging you: but the honour due to his merits far exceeds all my study. These words do plainly teach, that the Church in her true members, at that time, bestowed all diligence in seeking Christ. And now wee see by this prophesie (which with noted foot-steps hath exactly shewed the path-way through this Wildernesse) by what degrees the knowledge of Christ appeared again from *Frederick* the second, (after infernall darknesse covering the world by the Bishop of *Rome*) untill about the year, 1420.

Vers. 17. *Whither is thy beloved gone, O thou fairest among women? whither is thy beloved turned aside, that wee may seeke him with thee?*

This sheweth the great desire of the faithfull to seek Christ, offering their fellowship, and promising common aid in seeking. Which came in fashion, when the *Bohemians* got their liberty: for afterwards they were holpen with the writings of many learned men, as the *Waldenses*, *Albingenses*, *Wickliffe*, *Iohn Husse*, and *Hierome* of *Prague*, with all those before named. Lastly, the *Bohemians*, by whose diligence the beauty of Christ, by little and little, appeared in his members to the world. It was wonderfull, how they were presently kindled to seeke the truth in *England* and *Germany*, and many other places, so that all corners (of our coasts at least) sounded againe with the voices of them, asking, *Whither is thy beloved gone thou fairest among women? whither turneth thy beloved?* Yea; this speech was so generally received, that many daughters of *Ierusalem*, which knew him not before, not touched with any desire of him; now offered their ayde to seeke him. The Art of Printing hapning at the same time, (1440) by Gods singular benefit, did greatly helpe to set forth his fame, which continued 70. yeares and more, and could not be stayed by any meanes.

CHAP. VI.

MY welbeloved is gone down into his garden to the beds of spices, to feede in the gardens, and to gather lilies.

2 I am my welbeloveds, and my welbeloved is mine, who feedeth among the lilies.

3 Thou art beautifull, my love, as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, terrible as an army with banners.

4 Turne away thine eyes from me: for they overcome me: thine haire is like a flock of goates, which looke down from Gilead.

5 Thy teeth *are* like a flocke of sheepe, which go up from the washing, which every one bring out twins, and none is barren among them.

6 Thy temples *are* within thy lockes as a piece of a pomegranate.

7 There are threescore Queens, and fourescore concubines, and of the damosels without number.

8 *But* my Dove is alone, *and* my undefiled, she is the onely *daughter* of her mother, and she is deare to her that bare her: the daughters have seene her, and counted her blessed: *even* the Queenes and the concubines, and they have praised her.

9 Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, faire as the moone, pure as the sun, terrible as an army with banners?

10 I went downe to the garden of nuts, to see the fruits of the valley, to see if the vine budded, *and if* the pomegranates flourished.

11 I knew nothing, my soule set me as the charets of my noble people.

12 Returne, returne, O Shulamite, returne: returne that we may behold thee What shall you see in the Shulamite, but as the company of an Army?

The Resolution.

SO much of the Church cast down; now of the Church restored, in the whole, and in the parts. The whole, as well summarily, both in respect of the Bridegroome, verse 1.2. *and in respect of the enemies,* verse 3. *as severally by reason of certaine members of the whole body,* verse 4.5.6. *The parts are particular Churches, as Queenes, Concubines and Virgins,* verse 7. *amongst all which, one Dove excelleth,* verse 8. *And such is the eldest Sister. The younger are either a Princesse, or other inferiour Churches. Her condition is partly growing, partly of full age: her beginning is summarily delivered,* vers. 9. *Afterwards severally expressed, and how it was done,* vers. 10.11.12. *and what kinde of one she was when it was done,* Chap. 7.

THE EXPOSITON.

Vers. 1. *My beloved is gone downe into his garden, to the beds of spices: to feede in the Gardens and to gather Lillies.*

IN the beginning of the description the Spouse seeketh her beloved, not knowing where he was: as we have seene in the former Chapter. Now she taketh on her to teach that which before she desired to learn. To descend into the garden, is onely (as hath beene often said) to be present (as it were) to be taught with the hands, and seene with the eyes in purity of doctrine and integrity of all externall worship. Which hapned in the times of *Martin Luther*, in the yeare 1517. At what time the Spouse began somewhat to recover her health and strength. The *Waldenses*, *Wickliff*, the *Bohemians*, and other daughters of *Ierusalem* had taken great paines in seeking the Bridegroome, but the garden was never prepared with beds and borders for him, till now, when *Frederike* Duke of *Saxonie* by his own authority protected and defended the Church newly sprung up in *Wittenberg*, a City of his dominion. Here was the only garden at the first, and therefore she saith, *My beloved is gone downe into his garden.* The truth was plentifully sowne there, but little reformation for the first foure yeares, therefore is there but one garden mentioned. But shortly after more gardens were added to this one, as *Tigurum*, *Argentoratum*, *Basile*, *Berne*, *Geneva*, and also the Provinces of *Hassia* and *Prussia*, so that the second part of the verse saith rightly; *He went downe to feede in the Gardens*, for now there were many gardens made by distinction of fence, yet were all planted with the like fruite. He came not into this garden any longer to behold the bare and naked beds, but as it were feeding the elect by the nourishment of his word, he at the length gathered lillies in baskets and separated them from the wicked world, which Lillies were first gathered at *Wittenberg*, when the Masse began to be discontinued, & the Supper more purely to be administred in the yeare, 1521. The yeare following the Images were cast out. After theese yeares *Tygurum* and *Argentoratum* were reformed. This comming into the garden and gathering of Lillies is the harvest spoken of, *Rev.* 14.14.15.

Vers. 2. *I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine: he feedeth among the Lillies.*

She triumpheth in the same words as she did upon her returne from *Babylon*, *Chap.* 2.16. by which free profession, she declareth the boldnesse and constancie of those times, wherein the truth need no more whisper in corners, in feare and doubting, but might publish her self openly and be publiquely celebrated by the common speech of many men. Neither was the supportation of the Bridegroome lesse apparent in defending her mightily against her enemies. For if the hatred of the multitude, the rebukes of the Doctors, the curses of the Pope, the condemning of the Emperour, the conspiracies of Princes, the confiscation of goods, the danger of life, and all other things threatning present death, could have terrified the Spouse from professing her beloved: faith had bin utterly lost. The Spouse claimeth her beloved to be hers in the words of *Melanchthon* to Prince *Frederick*. Let us go on constantly, howsoever the world rage. Such was the mutuall imbracing of Christ and the Church at that time.

Vers 3. *Thou art beautifull O my love, as Tirzah, comely as Ierusalem, terrible as an Army with Banners.*

The explanation of this verse is divided into three times. The Beginning, Middle, and End. In the beginning she was faire as *Tirzah*, which *Solomon* without doubt foresaw, should be the chiefe City of the Israelites after the ten Tribes fell from the other two. It was a pleasant City, whence it tooke the name, (1 *Reg.* 14.17.) but as well by the estimation of men as in truth) it was but a fortresse of Robbers and rebels. And no other was the Church esteemed to be of her enemies (when her beloved went downe into his garden, and some time after) but a rebellous City, disobedient to Princes and Governours, and to carry a certaine shew of *Tirzah*. And thus the Church remained like unto *Tirzah* from the yeare 1529. (when the *Argentinenses* joyned with the *Helvetians*,) till the death of *Charles* the 5. in the yeare, 1558. And then she began to be comely as *Ierusalem*, when the unpleasant name of *Tirzah* grew out of use, which hapned in the beginning of Queen *Elizabeth* raign in *England*, in the yeare 1558. And in the yeare following in *Scotland*, *Geneva*, the *Helvetian* and *German* Churches, in *Denmarke*, *Norway*, and *Sweveland*, and other places of the reformed Religion. Not that they were altogether free from hostile invasion, great troubles shortly arising in *France* and the Low-countries: yet partly by her own increase, partly her adversaries tyred and ceasing somewhat from outward force, she was so much exalted, that her very enemies could not but admire her beauty and comelinesse, whose beginnings they despised. The last age of the restored Church, is *terrible as an Army with Banners.*

She shall bestow all her time in warlike preparations, and undertakings. For the hellish furies will not suffer her enemies to rest, neither will she endure her selfe to be rent and torne by the Wolves, but resist the injury with an armed hand. Whereby she shall become fearefull to her enemies, as she hath done these many yeares in *England*, *France*, and the *Low-Countries*. But this is nothing to that terrour which shall shortly follow, when Antichrist himself and his Ensignbearer (the King of *Spaine*) and all that carry his marke shall be so destroyed by the Spouse, that no mention of them shall remaine.

Vers. 4.

Vers. 4. *Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me: thy hayre is as a flock of Goats that appeare from Gilead.*

Now she enters into a speciall commendation of certain members, whereby the civill goverument of the Church may the better be understood. This cleerneſſe of sight, without doubt, was shewed in the doctrine of Justification by faith, whereby the Church (not with squient, but right eyes) beholdeth Christ, and all his righteousnes and excellency. And whatsoever excelleth in the judgement of the world, to be losse and dung to it, *Phil.* 3. 8. This eye was very dim in former times, untill *Martin Luther* divinely drew away those darke scales: For he wiped away all humane satisfactions, merits, superrerogations, indulgences, confidence in their own received wicked superstitions; and shewed the yoke of the law to be more grievous then all the Popes Buls were able to uphold; neither afterwards could the wicked Councel of *Trent*, nor the *Germane Interim* (forged altogether with fraud and deceit) dazle the sight of these eyes, but that they could discern e the authors of these deceits, spreading their nets in vain; neither was our *England* lesse sharp-sighted, when not only the Pope, but also the Papacie, was utterly rejected by the authority of our *Iosias*, that most holy King, *Edward* the sixth, of blessed memory. We see the divine beauty of these eyes, which at this day (God be thanked) is the same in all reformed Churches. The common people of the faithfull, signified by Hayre, is altogether the same, as it was in the first Church, *Chap.* 4. 1. scattered, contemned, put in great danger, which yet by no means, could be compelled to leave *Gilead*, and returne to *Bethaven*.

Vers. 5. *Thy teeth are as a flock of sheep which go up from the washing: whereof every one beareth twins, and there is not one barren amongst them.*

The Teeth are alwayes taken for the Pastors and Ministers of the Word, as *Cap.* 4. 2. where they were sent forth, two & two instructed with the like gifts and messages: As sheep are of a milde and pleasant disposition, and far remote from all ambition, so should the restored Church shine with faithfull Pastors; the true successors of those former, adorned with the self-same Ensignes as neer as the time would suffer. They which before boasted themselves to be Pastors, had altogether cast away the charge of preaching, and yet these men would be heires of the Apostles; whereas they were strong teeth; these filthy rotten bones: they Sheep; these Lyons. But at the length sound teeth sprung up again, such as were *Luther, Melanchon Bucer, Zuinglius, Oecolampadius, Capito, Calvin, Peter Martyr*, and many others, whose names are written in heaven. And verily the truth of this Prophecie, seemeth very apparent in the decree made at *Geneva*, in the yeare 1550. namely, that the Ministers not only in Sermons, (which some neglected, some heard them with small profit) but also severally through houses and families; at a certain time of the yeare, with a Magistrate of the City should instruct every one, and require a reckoning of every ones faith. And it is scarce credible what fruit followed, as *Beza* sheweth in the life of *Calvin*.

Vers. 6. *As a piece of Pomegranate, are thy temples within thy locks.*

This is the fourth agreement of this Church with the first, which we have shewed to belong to the Ecclesiasticall and civill government, in the use whereof the Church restored should be happy, which appeared by the holy Discipline restored again *Geneva*, by Gods singular benefit, together with the Gospe., in the year 1541. Which wee also see to be done in other Churches at this day: as in *Helvetia, Rhætia, France, the low Countries*, and *Scotland*, wherein the government requiring holinesse of life, according to the rule of doctrine, the truth flourisheth fruitfully and inviolably. But you will say, these times which we have described, shine not in all Reformed Churches; whereunto I answer, It is sufficient if we finde some such thing in any one Congregation: for this by a common necessity, shall belong to the commendations of all. And this is the summe of the agreement.

Vers. 7. *There are threescore Queens, and fourscore Concubines, and Virgins without number.*

Having spoken compendiously of the Church restored; some things are now briefly propounded, particularly in these two verses, wherein he divideth the severall Congregations into three ranks, according to their degrees of purity: namely, *Queens, Concubines*, and *Virgins*, or *Maids*; And she that comes neerest to truth and holinesse, the Bridegroome holdeth her dearest; wherefore the *Queens* are mighty, and flourishing Churches, which excell the rest in purity. The *Concubines* are of a lower ranke; they are admitted to the Bed; but far from the honour and excellency of the lawfull wives; having no dower themselves, nor are their children to inherite. The *Virgins* are in the lowest place, as servants and handmaids, altogether estranged from any familiar acquaintance, they have imployment in the house, they have victuals and clothing; they are reckoned to be of their Masters houshold, but are not partakers of his goods; they labour not for themselves, but for their Masters. It is also to be observed, the *Queens* are numbred, and so are the *Concubines*; but the *Virgins* (as of no reckoning) are without number. This distraction into such different degrees hapned about the yeare, 1562. When *John Brentius* and *James Andrewes*, rent the Church in pieces, with that unluckie division of that monstrous *Vbiquity*. It was before sowne by *Luther*, but he stayed the contention about it as long as he lived. But *Brentius* revived it; and three years after, *Illyricus*, and other Doctors out of far Countries, came to *Antwerp*, and renewed that error, whereby the face by the Church, even in her infancy, was miserably defiled; besides, *Anabaptists* and *Libertines*, *Antitrinitarians*, new *Arians*, and I know not what other monsters, which wasted and spoyled *Transilvania*, and the Regions thereabouts. The *English, Irish, Scottish, Belgick, Geneva, Helvetique, Rhetique*, do flourish (God be praised) with the dignitie of *Queens*, whereof the *Germane*, the *Danish, Gotique*, and *Sueveland* Churches, and others cleaving to their opinions, have taken a crowne to themselves, and have gotten the place of *Concubines*. Among the *Virgins* I reckon the *Anabaptists, Libertines, Antitrinitarians, Arians*, & the like, which now altogether miserably waste and destroy *Moravia, Polonia, Hungaria, Transilvania*, and a great part of *Denmarke*. To these may be added the *Roman* filthy sinck, whereso ever dispersed. We have seen the whole Song marvellous hitherto, but now especially, when we come to things present. Behold then the condition of the restored truth, into what unlike degrees she at length should fall by a great separation. The Spirit foretold a lamentable successe: this age feeleth it, and every day plainly threatneth a farther departure.

Vers. 8. *My Dove, my undefiled is but one, she is the only one of her mother shee is the choice one of her that bare her, the daughters saw her and blessed her, yea the Queenes and the concubines, and they praised her.*

Without doubt this *Dove* was one of the *Queenes*, far excelling in glory, and more beloved of the Bridegroome then the rest, adorned with a threefold testimonie: *Of the Bridegroome, of her mother, and of the rest in the family*. For the Bridegroome termeth her, his *Dove*, his *Undefiled one*. Any thing may be one, which is one in manners and disposition, though absent in place and seate; As the company of the faithfull are said to be one, though severed in far remote places, while they hold the same purity of Doctrine, and the like study of holinesse. The second testimonie is of her Mother, which is the Church, and the Word, to whose directions this *Dove* doth wholly apply her self. The third testimony is of the rest in the family. First, of the daughters

are particular Churches which are begotten of this only *Dove*, from whom they draw their instructions and the whole course of administration. Next the *Queenes* and *Concubines* bear witnesse both after one manner, but both very sparingly and more slenderly then the daughters, it may be through envie; They acknowledge her fair and beautifull, but perhaps they keep the branch to themselves; as jealous wives often do. All which sheweth how the wills were conjoyned, between the *Dove*, the *Daughters*, the *Queens*, and *Concubines*. Howsoever there be not the same degree of purity in all things. But where are the *Virgins* without number? Why is there no commendation of theirs rehearsed? Verily as they are further absent from familiar acquaintance of the Bridegroome, so are they more spitefully bent against his onely beloved *Dove*, neither (through hatred) can they say any thing well. Let us see then a more full distinction of the present Churches which are either true or titulary. The true, are *Queenes* and *Concubines*. The *Queenes* again are either the onely *Dove*, or more: and this onely one is partly the Mother, partly the Daughters. The titular Churches are the virgins. Who this onely *Dove* is, may easily be proved, if we consider the excellency of the Eyes, Teeth and Temples of the restored Church, for she that excelleth in the beauty of these members, must of necessity be that one onely *Dove*. Wherefore not trusting to mine own judgement but to the judgement of the Spirit himself: I beheld in this glasse the Church of *Geneva*, shining with the glory of this only *Dove*. For first let us consider the excellent comlinesse of the eyes, where sound and uncorrupt doctrine shineth, spotted with no comments of filthy flatterers, but especially the chastity of justification by faith, wherewith the Bridegroom is chiefly delighted. But this beauty is common to the other *Queens* and also the *Concubines*; Then let us behold the teeth, *namely the doctors*, like a flock of sheep, simple, harmlesse, not disdainfull, not luxurious, but content with a sparing diet: diligent in teaching, not so much troubled with worldly businesse that they can have no leasure for the word and doctrine. Not undertaking the charge of many Churches and serving none, nor may he that taketh the charge of one Church neglect it by his absence. Neither is any thought fit for that pastorall function which can but only read. Lastly, let us view the Temples, like a piece of a Pomgranate very beautifull. The governors together with the Pastors most honest men, watching over the manners of every man, and correcting them by divine institution, not sending them to the Romish horse-leaches, and the Antichristian decrees, the more to corrupt them, but endeavour to redeem their sins and publike offences, rather by repentance then for mony. Neither doth she command any idle ceremonies but what necessary reason onely requireth. Lastly, they which apply all to the authority which Christ hath given to the Church, that every member may perform his duty holily. The Spirit goeth no farther in the elder Church, because (as it seemeth) she shall persist in that variety which we now spake of: of *Queens*, *Concubines*, *Daughters*, *Doves* and *Virgins*, unto the end, without any notable change: and it may happen as corruption dayly increaseth, the *Dove* and the *Daughters* may be shut up in a narrow bound.

Vers. 9. *Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, cleer as the Sun, and terrible as an Army with Banners!*

Hitherto of the elder Church, and of things as well past as present. All the rest of the Treatise respecteth things to come, which the more obscurity they have, the more leave and pardon they crave. But nothing is so plain wherein the vanity of mans minde erreth not extremly, unlesse it be governed by divine light: nor any thing so concealed that it can lie hid, if this enlighten him. Thou therefore which hast enlightned the former darknesse, give light unto these following, that we being taught thy will, and beholding the glory of thy children may cheerfully and constantly proceed in our begun course of piety, neither terrified by any dangers, nor deceived by the deceitfull allurements of this world. It plainly appeared before, *Chap.* 5.6. that by this manner of asking is declared the new birth or rising up of some Church, by which afterwards thrice repeated, is signified, to be so many arisings of new Churches, or rather the approaching of new people to one and the same Church. Although others also are added, whose ascription is not declared in this kind of speaking, as we shall see in its place. Therefore wee divide the younger sister into three parts, whereof the first (which is the Princesse) is described from this very place, to the fifth verse of the eighth Chap. The second, from thence to the ninth verse: The third in the tenth and eleventh verses thereof. The first of the sisters is the Church of the *Iewes*, whose calling is to be expected within these few ages. After, the seat of *Antichrist* (the City of *Rome*) shall be utterly destroyed, which is to be very shortly. Hither all circumstances leade, wherewith the *Revelation* agreeth, and many Prophecies of the old Prophets. This calling shall be double: the first, from hence to the eighth verse of the seventh Chapter: The second in the rest. The condition of the first is in part, briefly delivered in this verse; and after, severally in the verses following. The generall explication teacheth what kinde of beginning and progresse there shall be for certain yeares. The first conversion shall be like the morning: The first growing age, *faire as the Moone*: The stronger age, *cleer as the Sunne*: The full strength thereof, *terrible, as an Army with Banners*. It is likened to the morning, because it shall not only be of a doubtfull and obscure light, (as is the first break of the day) but also, because the first light thereof shall appeare from the East: for *Daniel* (speaking of this first calling saith, *Rumors out of the East, and out of the North, shall trouble him*, Chap. 11.44. as more plainly (God willing) shall be said at that place. In which words he joyneth the North to the East, because the *Iewes* there banished, should gather together with those of the East to the same faith of Christ. In the *Revelation*, *Euphrates is dried up, that a way may be made for the Kings of the East*, Chap 16.12. After, when *the new Ierusalem shall descend from heaven, the first gate shall be Eastward*, Chap. 21.13. If you desire the time of this first conversion: God hath very much concealed the moments of time from us; yet I suppose it is certainly noted out in the Scripture. And the day drawing neer, will adde a cleerer light unto it, *Dan.* 12.4, *&c.* But as neer as we can attain to it by conjectures, (and those not light, as they seem to me) it is to be expected about the year 1650. as at the twelfth of *Daniel* the eleventh and twelfth verses shall be said more plainly. Such shall be the beginning of this new light; the progresse shall equall the beauty of the Moon, most cleerly enlightening the mighty darknesse, with a swift increase after the first appearing in a few dayes, like the full Moon: as *Esay* cryeth out, *Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be borne at once? for as soon as Sion travelled, she brought forth her children*, Chap. 66.8. The riper age shall strive with the Sunne, in glory, light, and cleernesse; the exceeding brightnesse shall be such, that it cannot be looked upon; yea, it shall be at length terrible to the enemies, no lesse then an Army furnished with Banners. We may observe out of these comparisons, how much more excellent the condition of this Church shall be, then ever it was of any other. Great was the dignity of the former, but at the most declared by similitudes taken from the earth, but here, as if the excellency of earthly things were not sufficient to set forth such glory, he flies upward towards heaven, taking *the Morning*, *the Moon*, *and Sunne* for comparisons: *Come Lord Iesu*, let us quickly see that pleasant sight, the gathering together of our dispersed brethren, that all flesh may acknowledge thee the only Lord; that thy unmeasurable faith and mercy which exceedeth

ceedeth all the straits of a created minde, may be celebrated and renowned in the mouths of all men.

Verſ. 10. *I went down into the Garden of Nuts to ſee the fruits of the vallie, and to ſee whether the vine flouriſhed, and the Pomegranates budded.*

The ſecond part of the deſcription expreſſeth ſeverally what was ſpoken even now generally. Hereof are two members, a preparation in this and the two next verſes. and the performance of the work effected in the chapter following. Of the firſt member are three degrees. A viſitation in this verſe, ſufficient ability in the next, and an effectuall calling in the 12. verſe. That which we tranſlate to the garden of Nuts, *Tremellius* turneth it to the garden of Pruning. How is the word fitted? The Jews a long time have been pruned gardens, wherein God hath exerciſed moſt ſevere loppings and prunings, *Rom.*11.20. Neither doth this interpretation differ from the diſpoſition of the Jewes, whoſe hearts were brawny with hardneſſe, *Rom.*11.25. whoſe ſtubbornnes and obſtinacy, *Eſay* moſt divinely deſcribeth, *Chap.*42.18.19.20. He calleth that people deaf and blind, hearing and ſeeing much and obſerving nothing. neither laid they the moſt grievous chaſtiſements to heart, *ver.*25. Alſo *Chap.* 65.2.3. *Rom.* 10.21. *The fruits of the Vally*, another note whereby the Jews are marked out, that they are as it were lateward trees bearing fruit very ſlowly, ſuch are they that are planted in vallies, which the hills every way ſo hinder, that they cannot be refreſhed with the heat of the Sun: Such then ſhall Chriſt find the *Iewes* when he ſhall viſit them, like Nuts covered with a hard ſhell; neither more excellent, with any branch or bud of true converſion towards God, whereby they may ſhew themſelves to be indued with any vital ſtrength from heaven, then trees planted in the ſhadow of ſteep rocks, (which other trees flouriſhing) remain as half dead: yet are there among that people both *vines and Pomegranates*. The hard winter as yet keepeth back the buds, but at length in fit time, the Sun of righteouſnes ſhall thaw that frozen earth, and ſhall afford a more gentle aire whereby they may break forth freely.

Verſ. 11. *Or ever I was aware, my ſoule made me like the Chariots* (or *ſet me on the chariot*) *of my willing people.*

So ſhall the people be when Chriſt ſhall firſt viſit them. Now he teacheth the ſufficient ability of the converſion. The meaning is (that I ſtand no longer refuting other mens opinions) as if he ſhould ſay. I deſcended indeed into my garden, but I verily did ſuppoſe no ſuch thing as at length happned. I expected a ſtubborn and obſtinate people, but after that, I found them eaſie and ready to receive me, my minde inforced me to ſhew my ſelfe unto them in ſtead of chariots, wherewith I might quickly bring them into the Church and reckon them among her citizens. Undoubtedly he added a ſpur to them running, neither would he be wanting to their ſtudy, wherby he might ſupply that which might help forward the begun work. Therefore *Eſay* ſaith, *He ſhall bring all your brethren out of all nations for an offering to the Lord, with horſes and chariots, and litters and mules, and ſwift beaſts to the hill of my holines, cap.*66.20. Theſe *chariots* ſeem to be the ready aid that the Gentiles ſhould bring the Jews, to recover their former ſeats. But did not Chriſt know what the ſtudy & readines of this people ſhould be? The things are ſpoken hiſtorically, that their converſion ſhould be beyond all expectation: for as *Eſay* ſaith, *ſo that thou mayeſt ſay with thy minde, who hath begotten me theſe? ſeeing I am deprived and am deſolate. I have been a captive and remain to and fro, and who hath brought up theſe? behold I was left alone, theſe, where have they been? Chap.* 49.21. He ſheweth a thing having great admiration: for time will teach many things to be in the Prophets, which we commonly interpret as though they were paſt, whoſe event is yet to come: and eſpecially (as it ſeemeth to me) in the calling of the Jews: which verily little conſidered of ours, hath darkned (I will not ſay, perverted) the proper and naturall meaning of the Prophets in many places.

Verſ. 12. *Return, return, O Shulamite, return: return, that we may look upon thee. What will ye ſee in the Shulamite? as it were the company of two Armies.*

The third member of the former cauſes. *The effectuall calling.* Which ſhall be earneſt and thruſt on with great enforcement, as the twice two doubled words do ſignifie: whether that of *Eſay* ſeemeth to belong, *How beautifull upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publiſheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publiſheth ſalvation, that ſaith unto Zion, Thy God raigneth. Thy watchmen, &c. Chap.* 52.7.8. It is evident, that that whole chapter entreateth of the laſt calling of the Jews, whoſe felicity ſhould be eternall, never to be interrupted, verſ.2 He alſo maketh mention of a threefold captivity. The *Egyptian*, the *Aſſyrian*, and a voluntary, verſ.3.4.5 In which laſt hapned the moſt miſerable condition of the Jewiſh people: wherein they have been ſince Chriſts time. For they were in times paſt inforced into Egypt by hunger. Into *Aſſyria* they were drawn by force of war. Only the Romanes did not compell them to turn, but they diſperſed themſelves here and there through the whole world of their own accord. Or rather, that they were in that place & reckoning in this laſt captivity, as held for things of nothing: whoſe greateſt worth any man might purchaſe at the vileſt price, as *Pſalm.*44.13. And who ſeeth not his people, accounted for nothing in the multitude of captives partly ſent to the *Egyptian* mines, partly ſlain upon the ſcaffolds of cities. where they were compelled to fight either with wild beaſts, or among themſelves to kill one another, as it came to paſſe at the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem* by *Titus*. Or if *Adrian* ſtraightly forbad the Jews their country ſoil, yet this captivity was free, becauſe the Romanes aimed not at any benefit by their ſervice, as the *Egyptians* and *Aſſyrians* did, but only the quietneſſe of the province. Chriſt by the preſence of his fleſh brought them not deliverance from this captivity, but will bring it at length by turning their hearts to the faith. But perhaps Saint *Paul* ſaith the contrary who applieth the ſame to the Apoſtles ſent in times paſt, *Rom* 10.15. But I think it will ſeem otherwiſe if we well conſider it: his purpoſe in that place, is to prevent an offence taken of the Jewes incredulity. Now there were chiefly two things which might make the Gentiles doubt. *The ancient Laws of the Iewes: and the preſent ſtudy of piety.* Were not that moſt like to be the truth which a nation (vouchſafed ſo much honour before al others, & no leſſe fervent as yet, with an earneſt deſire to worſhip God) ſhould not only acknowledge, but alſo purſue it moſt earneſtly. In the former chapter, he oppoſeth election to the old Law: here he entreateth of the ſtudy of piety: where he granteth them zeal, but leſt any ſhould be deceived with the ſhew thereof, he teacheth how farre diſtant it is from true piety or Religion. The only righteouſnes of God is the righteouſneſſe of faith, altogether differing from the righteouſneſſe of the Law, which alone while the Iewes ſought for, they obtained not, what they deſired, and in the meantime miſſed of the truth. This effect have the words from verſ.3. to verſ. 14. Then making a difference of ſaying and legall righteouſneſſe, leſt any doubt ſhould yet ſtick in their ſtomacks; he teacheth yet a little more plainly, why they could not approach to this ſaving righteouſneſſe, which he ſaith, is chiefly placed in calling upon the Lord, verſ.13. How, ſaith he, ſhall they call? that is, How ſhall the *Iewes* call, &c. But let us return to *Solomon*. It is to be obſerved that theſe words yeeld two arguments, whereby they may appear properly to belong to the Church of the *Iews*. Firſt, becauſe the exhortation or incouragement is expreſſed in a word of returning: whereby he granteth that the Nation which he now calleth, had been before turned away: which cannot properly take place in any other, but in the *Iewiſh* Nation. Secondly, of ſet purpoſe for difference ſake he calleth her by her countrey name, of the *Old Salem*: Whereas before confeſſedly through the whol Song, he had

the Citizens of the Church gathered together, as of the Gentiles as of the Jews, by the name of daughters of Jerusalim. That is to say, by this difference it might plainly appear, that he now turned his speech to the old Countrey breed, letting alone the new inhabitants which are free in the City by Christ. Fourthly, after the Conversion he sheweth the *Shulamite*, by the similitude of Tents, that she shall deliver her selfe by Arms from the power of her enemies, whom she now serveth. For that of *Ezekiel*, 38. and 39. happeneth at the same time, when *Gog* and *Magog*, that is, the Turk and the Tartar, with all the wicked *Mahumetanes* shall utterly perish by the sword of the converted and returned *Iewes*. See *Dan.* 11.44. and 45. *Revel.* 20.9. Whither also belongeth that of *Zacharie*. *When I shall sturre up thy sons O Zion against thy sonnes O Iavan*, Chap. 9.13.

CHAP. VII.

1 HOw beautifull are thy goings with shooes, O Princes daughter! the joynts of thy thighs *are* like jewels: the work of the hand of a cunning workman.

2 Thy navell *is as* a round cup that wanteth not liquor: thy belly *is as* an heap of wheat compassed about with lilies.

3 Thy two breasts *are* as two young roes that are twins.

4 Thy neck *is* like a Tower of Ivory: thine eyes *are like* the fish pools in Heshbon by the gate of Beth-rabbim: thy nose *is* as the tower of Lebanon that looketh toward Damascus.

5 Thine head upon thee *is* as scarlet: and the bush of thine head like purple: the King *is* tied in the rafters.

6 How fair art thou, and how pleasant art thou, O *my* love in pleasures!

7 This thy stature is like a Palme tree, and thy breast like clusters.

8 I said, I will go up into the palme tree, I will take hold of her bows: thy breast shall now be like the clusters of the vine: and the savour of thy nose like apples.

9 And the roof of thy mouth like good wine, which goeth straight to my welbeloved, and causeth the lips of the ancient to speak.

10 I am my welbeloveds, and his desire is toward me.

11 Come my welbeloved, let us go forth into the field: let us remain in the villages.

12 Let us get up early to the vines, let us see if the vine flourish, *whether* it hath budded the small grape, *or whether* the Pomegranates flourish: there will I give thee my love.

13 The mandrakes have given a smell, and in our gates are all sweet things, new and old: my welbeloved I have kept *them* for thee.

The Resolution.

YOu have heard in what manner the Conversion was. Now is shewed the most glorious condition of the Converted, as well by the beautie inherent to every member, vers. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. *and the whole bodie*, vers. 6, 7. *as also the coming by chance of the Bridegroom, dwelling in her branches*, vers. 8. *and the savour of the Nose and Palate*, vers. 9. *whereby it commeth to passe that they rest perpetually in one anothers love*, vers. 10. *And such is the growing condition of the* Princesse, *the younger daughter. The riper age shall bring worshippers in greater number, the occasion whereof is shewed*, vers. 11, 12, 13. *and the effect in the beginning of the Chapter following.*

THE EXPOSITION.

Vers. 1. *How beautifull are thy feeet with shooes, O Princes daughter! The joints of thy thighs are like jewels, the work of the hands of a cunning workman.*

A Particular description of each member is here begun from benath, for such shall the progresse of things be. Heretofore alwayes the beginning was made from the head. The place of the eyes teeth, and temples: because the first beginnings were more famous and sooner perceived, in the Doctors and the administration appointed. but now in a wonderfull manner, the feet shall be first converted, and shall begin to stand and walk in the right way, as some notable reason shall discover, why such a thing should be done. He therefore admireth the beauty of her feet, because it was verily a thing full of admiration. A shooe is applyed in the Scriptures to three significations. To *Mirth*, *Speed*, and *Liberty*. It was a sign of Mirth; from whence in mourning they either put them off, of their own accord; As *David ascended to the Mount of Olives, his head covered and barefoot*, 2 *Sam.* 15.30. Or they were constrained against their wils as Captives to the victors, who led them naked and barefoot, *Esa*, 20 4 Speed hath somwhat a more plain efficacy, for he that is shod, treadeth more boldly, and feareth not pibbles or thorns. Wherefore God when he assured a speedy return to his people, he promiseth to bring it to passe, that they shall go with shooes on their feet, *Esa.* 11.15. It was also to the Israelites a signe of liberty, or rather of obtaining their redeemed inheritance. Whereas putting off the shooe was for a reproach, *Deut.* 25. 9, 10. Whither as it seems belongeth, how God commanded *Moses* drawing neer to him, to put off his shooe, *Exod.* 3.5. to put us in minde in how base a condition flesh is before him. All the significations agree. The *mirth* of the people returning, their *speed* of returning, and the recovery of their ancient inheritance, will without doubt be a matter of wonderfull glory and of great admiration; so that worthily the Nations may cry out, *how beautifull are thy feet!* see *Esay* 52.12, 13, 14, 15. They shall make hast out of this captivity, as when one runneth away from his master, or as the Israelites in old time out of Egypt: but with great constancy of mind and assured confidence, so as the Nations shall be amazed, and the Kings shall stop their mouths, when they shall see that which was not told them; for then God shall bring to passe, that his people may enjoy their desolate possessions. *Esa.* 49.8. The second part of the verse signifieth that nimble turning joynt, whereby the upper part of the thighes are fitly turned. Or rather perhaps it may more fitly signifie a turning from one way into another; as if he should say, the turning away of thy thighs from thy former stubbornesse to true piety and faith in Christ. Jewels are fitted into many turning Circles, whose artificiall turnings doe excellently set forth this wonderfull conversion or turning of the thighs and feet. Moreover

over they are the work of the hands of a *cunning workman*. See how sweetly these words agree with those of S. *Iohn*, *Rev.* 19.11. where in a larger explication of the sixth viall, that is to say, the calling of the Iews, the workman is described, by whose hands these Iews and joynts of the thighs are framed First by his name, agreeing with the same in this place: he was pleased to take this name to himself, that he might at length declare in very deed, how faithfull he was in performing promises, and giving salvation to his people. But hence see, the conversion of the heart shall not proceed of themselves, but from this faithful workman, who shall frame these joynts, and work these nimble turnings.

Vers. 2. *Thy navell is like a round goblet, which wanteth not liquor: thy belly is like a heap of wheate set about with Lillies.*

Interpreters refer these words to meat and drink; but in this song, comelinesse and honesty is chiefely respected: and nourishment is signified by those members; which they are appointed to by nature. I judge it rather to signifie fertility, flourishing fresh in them whose bodies are full of juyce, not dry and without blood. *A heap of wheat*, declareth the belly like a furrow, well stored with the best seed, which watered and made fruitfull by mixture of the *Gablet*, would at length break forth into an infinit harvest. These things are more plain with *Esay*, *cap.* 49. 19. 20. *The belly set about with lillies*, sheweth that this field (unlike other fields) shall not be fenced with bushes and quicksets, but shall every way lie open, and be altogether so pleasant, not only in the middle where the more fruitfull increase is wont to be, but also in the uttermost borders. And most fitly also are lillies joyned to the rest, seeing nothing is more fruitfull, bearing often 50. heads upon one Root, *Plin. l.* 21. 5.

Vers. 3. *Thy two breasts are like two young Roes that are twins.*

Excellent shall this Church be in doctrine: whose ministers God shall water with fatnesse, *Ier.* 31. 14 They shall be base and simple at the beginning, like young Roes, wallowing in the dust, when they are first brought forth. for as yet a setled Church shall not be fully gathered together, as by the labour of some certain Apostles, who staying in no certain places shall go hither and thither to Preach, according as the cause requireth. In the same manner as it was done in the first Church, as before *Chap.* 4 5. See also what hath been observed upon *Esay*, at the last verse of the former Chapter.

Vers. 4. *Thy neck is as a Tower of Ivory, thine eyes like the fishpooles in Heshbon, by the gate of Bath-rabbim: Thy nose is as the Tower of Lebanon which looketh toward Damascus.*

Mercerus doubteth whether there were a Tower of this name. *Rabbi Selom*, and the *Chaldee* paraphrasts think there was; and I am of their mind, for all these similitudes seem to be taken from true things & not feigned. Yea, for most weighty causes, as anon it will appeare some more eminent places are chosen of purpose for this part of the description. This Ivory Towre I suppose to be the Ivory throne spoken of 1 *King.* 10.18. The neck of the first Church was also a Tower, in the same Mount where this Throne was built, namely an Armory for *David* and the war: wherein all the instruments of warre were put, as before *Chap.* 4. 4. But this Tower is *Solomons* of peace, not of warre; of Judgement, not of Armour. That though triumphing, yet afflicted with many troubles of warres. This, her enemies overcome very easily, shall raigne in peace like *Solomon*: for such a flourishing estate doe the Prophets promise this Church, all her enemies put to flight, *Esay* 41.14.15. *Ier.* 30.31. *Ezech.* 39.3,4,25, &c. *Thine eyes like the fishpools in Heshbon. Tremelius* translateth it appellatively, to most artificiall fishpools But I suppose those places to be noted out by name, chiefely for this reason, that by choosing out some of notable places (as we shall see) *Solomon* seemeth to appoint out the territories and borders of that land, which the *Iewes* at length (converted to Christ, delivered from the Nations, and restored to their Country seats) shall obtain proper, and their own. But what (will ye say) dost thou turn *Iew*? God forbid. I dream not of that return, which as yet they do, That they may renew the Temple, restore the Ceremonies, and possesse the land in times past, promsed and given as an earnest of the heavenly. (These things are eternally buried, not worne out by time, but utterly abolished by Christ.) But I speak of a restoring to their Country, wherein they shall worship Christ according to his Ordinances: which is not contrary to Religion every one knoweth, and all the Prophets seem to foretell it with one consent. When I think hereof, it seemeth no light Argument, that untill this day that people remain (although dispersed through the whole world) divided and separated from the Nations with whom they live. A thing truly wonderfull marvellous, but that it appears plainly to be Gods doing. We know the *Gothes*, *Vandals*, *Hunnes*, and very many other Nations, forsaking their Countries, have also changed their speech, names, and natures. So that (were it not for letters) they cannot be discerned from the people of the Country with whom they live. But the *Iews*, like the River *Rosne* in the poole *Lausane*) suffer none of our customes to be fastned on them, but in the midst of us, keep their old name and Ordinance: would we know the cause? First, God would have them, for the sale of his despised Sonne, be a spectacle to the world: then also to advise us, lest the people commonly accounted superstitious, should perhaps make saving doctrine suspected by their consenting. Lastly, that he might make plaine his infinite and unmeasurable favour and truth at length, in restoring this people. We have far digressed from our purpose, but not altogether into a strange matter, and whereof a brief Declaration was necessary. Seeing then that *Heshbon* is to be properly taken; know that it was once a City beyond *Iordan*, common to the *Gadites* and the *Rubenites*, *Num.* 21. 26, 27, 28. At first Noble, known by the Proverb, and once the Palace of *Sihon*: which City seemeth to teach the recovery of their old possession, of whose Eastern coast this City is placed as it were the Meere-stone.

And most fitly are the eyes compared to Fishpools, not so much for the cleernesse, which sheweth the brightnesse of the water, as for the abundance of teares flowing from true repentance. *Iere.* 31.9, 18, 19. *Isay* 46. *Zachar.* 12.10. Neither without cause likewise are the gates mentioned by which these Fishpools are seated: which as they are called *Bath-rabbim*, *the daughters of many* or of a multitude, most frequented by resort of people: so they teach that there shall be at length an infinite multitude of this people gathered to the truth by repentance. It might seem harsh to compare the Nose to a Tower, but that the Counsell of the spirit alwayes puts us in mind that things and places are chosen, whereby the borders of the land may be described. *Ier.* 31.8. *Ese.* 49.20. The house of *Libanus* is famous in the Scripture. But that the Tower thereof looketh toward *Damascus* seemeth to be added for difference sake. There were two houses of the forrest of *Lebanon*, one built on the hill as this place plainly sheweth, See, 2 *Chron.* 9. 16, 17, 18. Another at *Ierusalem* (in the forrest) not farre from the house of *Solomon*, which for likenesse was called the house of the forrest of *Lebanon*, whereof mention is made, 1 *King.* 7 2. For the whole provision wherewith *Solomon* built this house, proveth that to be another from that in *Lebanon*, 1 *King.* 10. 17, 21. What need such sumptuous houshold-stuffe in houses so farre asunder: when there was scarce any hope that the King would see them twice? But most cleerly, *Shishack carried away the shields of gold which were found in the house of the forrest of Lebanon*, 1 *King.* 14. 26. It seemeth that house was then in the power of *Rehoboam* and at *Ierusalem*; for the King of Egypt went no farther. And doubtlesse the house of *Mount Lebanon*, in the falling away of the ten Tribes, ceased to be of the Dominion of *Rehoboam*.

But

But in this place it is uſed to ſet forth the North border of the holy land to the Eaſt, as the *Hebrews* in my judgment do rightly interpret it.

Verſ. 15: *Thine head upon thee is like Carmel, and the haire of thy head like purple. The King is held in the Gutters, or in the Galleries.*

Carmel is a Mountain of *Phenicia*, not far from *Lebanon*, known to *Strabo* and *Ptolemy*. Here then take the weſt ſide, in which nothing falleth out more fitly then this Mountain, which may be compared with the head. Twice before, by the haire we underſtood the multitude of the faithfull to be ſignified. There they were like *Goates* appearing from Mount *Gilead*; here like fine flax of purple die, as if every one then ſhould be a Prince, and endued with Princely dignity, whereof purple is the ſign. This Church before was called a Princes daughter, and Saint *Iohn* calleth the faithfull, Kings. But *Zachary* more plainly ſaying, *The baſeſt among them ſhall be as David, &c. Zach.* 12.8. God forbid that I ſhould through envy conceal any thing that the Spirit ſeemeth to will, and ſhould not rather with my whole heart rejoyce at this excellent glory of my brethren, though beholding it a farre off. This place by force of oppoſition giveth light to that of the Goates, a baſe ſtinking creature and full of filth. Not that Chriſtians are ſuch in themſelves, but are accounted ſuch in the world. Baſe and ſimple hath their condition been through the whole race of the calling of the Gentiles, to this of the Jews, as we have obſerved, *Chap.* 4. *The King is held in the gutters.* I aſſent to thoſe learned men which think it alludeth to that, *Gen.* 30. 38. But their application ſeemeth to me farre otherwiſe, although that place yet yeeldeth the ſame. For as thoſe pilled Rods put in the Gutters, and beheld by the ſheep (when being very hot they came to drink) cauſed to bring forth Lambs ſo ſpeckled and ſpotted: even ſo the King is here ſaid to be held in the Gutters, that the faithfull having him alwaies before their eyes, in the place where they quench their thirſt, ſhall beget Kings by his example, a new Chriſtian off-ſpring. So that theſe words yeeld a very good reaſon of that which was next before ſaid. For when he had even now commended the *purple haire*, whereunto I applied a Royall dignity of all the faithfull: leſt any ſhould marvell, he yeeldeth a reaſon why it ſhould be ſo done, becauſe all the faithfull ſhall be born Kings: for the king himſelf is held in the Gutters whither they ſhould come to drink, and to quench their thirſt: it cannot be but they waxing hot at the ſight of him, ſhall bring forth ſuch Children, as they ſee him ſet forth before their eyes. But how can the King be bound in the Gutters? After the ſame manner as Chriſt ſet forth to the view was Crucified among the *Galatians*, by the powerfull preaching of the Word, *Galat.* 3.1. This is that ſtream wherein he is held and from whence they draw to quench their thirſt. Now he is ſaid to be bound in the Gutter, becauſe they ſhall never afterward be deſtitute of him.

Verſ. 6. *How faire and how pleaſant art thou O Love, for delights!*

A ſententious concluſion or rather an univerſall commendation, wherein he declareth the excellent beauty of the other members, which he mentioned not ſeverally. Every word hath its Emphaſis or expreſſe ſignification. The manner of a king hath admiration, the ſame repeated, ſheweth no Common but a moſt vehement and ſingular admiration. The abſtract ſheweth pure and perfect love, not infected with the pollution of any contempt: delights are laſtly caſt into the heap, if any thing more could be added. Neither are theſe things added to ſet forth her beauty alone, or only to expreſſe with what deſire the Bridegroom purſueth the Church, but it chiefly belongeth to the Hiſtory, and ſheweth this Church to be moſt excellent, not only in the praiſe of certain members, but to be admired in the beauty & propernes of the wholbody

Verſ. 7. *This thy ſtature is like to a Palm-tree; and thy breaſts to cluſters of Grapes.*

Theſe words alſo belong to the generall commendation: for *Stature* is the heighth and talneſſe of the whole body, whereby it reacheth up on high, which is not wont to be conſidered in the firſt years, but when the body is come to its full growth; ſhe therefore is ſaid to be like *a Palm-tree*, which groweth upward, with what weight ſoever it be preſſed down: So this Church ſhall be advanced cheerfull and famous, yet after much toyle and labour: for it cannot be, but in the beginning ſhe ſhall meet with many moſt mortall enemies, *Gog* and *Magog*, the *Mahumetan people*, which ſhall give an occaſion of the utter ruine and riddance of that moſt miſchievous Tyrant; yet ſhall § Church receive no loſſe thereby, but in deſpite of all, ſhal riſe up, & attain to a juſt degree of dignity. *Thy breaſts* (ſaith he) *are like cluſters of Grapes.* Before the *breaſts* were like *young Roes*; but now, when the Church ſhall begin to be ſettled, the *breaſts* ſhall be changed into *cluſters of Grapes*, moſt plentifull and pleaſant fountains: for Grapes full of juice, being preſſed, run all into liquor, yeelding abundance of plenty and pleaſure, as well for neceſſity as delight.

Verſ. 8. *I ſaid, I will go up to the Palm-tree, I will take hold of the boughs thereof: alſo thy breaſts ſhall be as the cluſters of the vine, and the ſmell of thy noſe like Apples.*

Now are other ornaments remembred, as of the Bridegroom dwelling in the branches of this *Palm-tree*. The declaration of the *Breaſts*, *Noſe*, *Palate* of the Spouſe, and the mutuall deſire whereby they wholly reſt in one anothers love: we have often ſaid, how they both deſire to expreſſe themſelves one toward another, not only to ſhew their mutuall love, but alſo, how the faithfull are affected towards the Church: As in this place, where the Bridegroom having a purpoſe and determination to climb this *Palm-tree*, he ſheweth thereby, what the faithfull ſhall wiſh for, after they ſhall ſee the Church ſettled and confirmed, how deſirous they ſhall be to dwell in her branches and to gather her ſweeteſt fruits: As *Iſay* ſaith, *Chap.* 49.18 and *Zachary*, *Chap.* 8.23. The nations ſhall deſire to be exalted in the heighth of her proſperity; whence it is ſaid in the *Revelations*, Chap. 21. 24. *They ſhall bring their glory to this new Ieruſalem, I wiſh thy breaſts were, &c.* The words are ſpoken in the manner of wiſhing, that the faithfull ſhall with all their indeavour ſtrive, as well to have theſe good things communicated unto them, as to be kept, increaſed, and inlarged: They ſhall deſire to be fed with theſe breſts, and ſhall earneſtly beſeech the Lord, that they may never dry up: They alſo ſhew how this *Spouſe* ought to behave her ſelf towards theſe new gueſts, to whom ſhe is bound to beſtow her breaſts, as well as to her own. *And the ſmell of thy Noſe as Apples.* Theſe words ſeem to concern holineſſe of common life. We alwayes breath with the noſtrils, as long as there is any power of life; whence *Ieremy* ſaith, *The breath of our noſtrils, the anoynted of the Lord is taken in their pits, Lam.* 4.20. She prayeth therefore that to the abundant doctrine, which is laid up in the breaſts (as in Wels never to be drawn dry) may be joyned the ſweetneſſe of manners and integrity of all holines.

Verſ. 9. *And the roof of thy mouth like the beſt Wine that goeth down ſweetly, cauſing the lips of thoſe that are aſleep to ſpeake.*

The force of this manner of wiſhing as yet remaineth. The palate or roof of the mouth, ſignifieth words, which are formed by the help thereof; it differeth from the breaſts, becauſe they are the cloſet and ſtore-houſe, wherein (as in a treaſury) great ſtore of learning is laid up; but the palate and lips are as keyes, wherewith the Treaſury is unlocked, and the riches laid up is brought forth for uſe: for it little profiteth, to have riches heaped up, unleſſe they may be applyed to uſe and profit when need requireth That we may then underſtand this Church to be, not only rich and plentifull in all abundance, but alſo happy in the uſe and fruit thereof; he no leſſe foreſheweth the ſweetneſſe of the palate, then the fertility

tility of the breasts. *It causeth the lips of those that are asleep to speak.* This is an excellent comendation of this Wine so strong and powerfull, that it can shake off drowsinesse in men half dead, make the minde and sences more nimble; loose the tongue, before sticking to the awes, and make it wonderfull eloquent. *Esay* expoundeth this riddle, saying, *Chap.* 35.5. *Then shall the Cripple skip as the Hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing.*

Vers. 10. *I am my beloveds, and his desire is towards me.*

The Spouse at length concludeth this place as if she should say, It needeth not that we should stand reckoning up every thing; that condition briefly shall be such, that the Church with all study and desire, shall be altogether affected and consecrated to Christ, and shall find him again so kinde and loving, as if he wholy applied himself to this only Care.

Vers. 11. *Come my beloved, let us go forth into the field, let us lodge in the villages*: or, *among the Cypresse trees.*

So much of the first calling, now followeth the second: that which remaineth of the Chapter, is a preparation of this second calling, which doth wholly set forth the *Spouse* her inviting the *Bridegroome* into the countrey, shewing, that these first fruits of the *Iewes* shall burne with great desire to win the rest of their nation, and shall not cease till they bring it to passe. But why doth the *Spouse* desire the countrey? Is she weary of the city: or doth desire a more fresh ayre? Indeed they that are long pend up in the city, are wont oftentimes for their mindes sake, to avoid company, and desire solitary rest; but this going into the fields or villages, seeketh not pleasure so much, as it stirreth up to new work and labour. If she had desired it, to avoid the heat of the Sunne, or for pleasant banquetting, whereto serveth this lodging abroad? She therefore goeth a hunting, not to catch wilde beast, but men; very many *Iewes* were yet busied in the countrey without the holy City, for whom all this watching and trouble shall be undertaken; that they may be gathered into one sheepfold, and fitted into one body of Christ with their brethren. This vocation shall so much exceed the former, as the open fields exceed the city, or the whole multitude a small company; *Daniel*, Chap. 12.12. appointeth the time thereof 45. yeares after the first, which will happen abont the year 1700. The exact time cannot be set downe, it is enough for us, if we come neer the truth.

Vers. 12. *Let us get up early to the vineyards: let us see if the vines flourish: whether the tender grapes appear, and the Pomegranats bud forth, there will I give thee my love.*

That which the Bride lately entreated, now she urgeth with certain reasons. The end of the journey and the full acquaintance in this verse. The perfection of all delights in the verse following. The end of being in the country is that she might arise early to the vineyard. It was some trouble to watch among the Cypresse trees, but this addeth more, to go forth so early to the vines: wherein we learn, her chiefest care was in gathering these citizens of the second order, wherein she spared no labour or diligence: she will goe into the country, not refusing the tediousnesse of the long journey: she will endure the discommodity of watching in the villages, and that nothing be wanting by her will, she will arise early in the morning to dispatch the businesse, and which is more to be admired, whiles yet no harvest appeareth which might worthily require the plainfull labour; *Esay* mentioneth this desire, when after the fore-shewed great glory of the reformed, and much adorned spouse, beholding in the Spirit the full conversion of the whole nation, he cryeth out, *Go thorow, go thorow the gates, prepare you the way of the people: cast up, cast up the high way, gather out the stones, lift up a standard for the people, Chap* 62.10. By which doubled words he sheweth their incredible desire of gathering the reliques and bringing them into one Church. *The vines, grapes and Pomgranates* are the elect of the Jews, whose prone readines to imbrace the truth is like a most pleasant spring, the elect had tried their winter, which deprived them of fruit and leaves, that they could scare be known from dead trees.

The second member of the verse sheweth another reason of going into the country, There (saith she I will give *my loves to thee*, that it is to say, I will shew my self freely to thee that thou mayest delight thy self in my company: for to give one my love honestly and shamefastly, is to give him full power over me, Therefore the glory of Christs Kingdom shall not be full till this justication.

Vers. 13. *The Mandrakes give a smell, and at our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old, which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved.*

Mandrakes, saith *Plinie*, have a strong smell, but here is no commendation of the sent, but mention is made of it only to shew the budding and growth thereof. It is a cold herb, drowsie and lateward, it seems it grew in the fields in the land of *Canaan*, *Ruben found Mandrakes in the field*, *Gen.* 30.14. They are also opposed in this place to those more delicate fruits which are planted neer the house, as well for delight as for more easie keeping. The new and old fruits have a plain meaning. An excellent division of the citizens seemeth here to be set forth, whereof some are far scattered in remote colonies, like *Mandrakes* growing in the open fields; others like domestique milder fruit, which by vicinity or neer neighbour-hood yeeld more plentifull delights. Some again are newly fresh planted into the Church, like *Mandrakes*, cold and lateward herbs springing more slowly, such shall the Jews be lastly called, which shall more lately shake off their drowsinesse. Some are elder, who shall yeeld their names to the first calling, and spend their time in the received truth somewhat before the rest shall come in. This shall be a most pleasant beholding to the elders, when they shall see Religion not to decay with the age: which alas, we behold to our grief as if the fulnesse of the gentils did now approach, every later generation in their degrees fall away from the sanctity of their parents. The latter part of the verse teacheth that the spouse shall have a time at length to unlocke her store-houses, and as it were in pompe, openly set forth her unmeasurable riches in the exceeding great abundance of her citizens. Thrifty housholders do not suffer all things to be used continually, and confusedly, but reserve some things for solemn feasts, set apart from dayly uses, which they may bring forth as occasion serveth for credit and honesty: So the Church, howsoever she hath oftentimes before declared her self not poor and needy, but sufficient rich and abundantly adorned with all dignity, yet she hath not applied these dainty banquets, delicate dishes, and sweet meates to common and dayly diet, but hath reserved them lockt up in store for this one solemnity: whereby we may understand the glory of those times to be such as the former ages have never seen.

CHAP. VIII.

OH that thou werst as my brother that sucked the breasts of my mother: I would finde thee without, I would kisse thee, then they should not despise thee.

2 I will lead thee, *and* bring thee into my mothers house: *there* thou shalt teach me: *and* I will cause thee to drink spiced wine, *and* new wine of the pomegranate.

3 His left hand *shall be* under mine head, and his right hand shall embrace me.

4 I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, that you stirre not up, nor waken *my* love, untill he please,

5 (Who is this that cometh up out of the wilderneſſe, leaning upon her welbeloved?) I raiſed thee up under an apple tree: there thy mother conceived thee: there ſhe conceived that bare thee.

6 Set me as a ſeal on thy heart, *and* as a ſignet upon thine arme: for love *is* ſtrong as death: jealouſie is cruell as the grave: the coales thereof *are* fierie coales, *and* a vehement flame.

7 Much water cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man ſhould give all the ſubſtance of his houſe for love, they would greatly contemne it.

8 We have a little ſiſter, and ſhe hath no breaſts: what ſhall we do for our ſiſter when ſhe ſhall be ſpoken for?

9 If ſhe be a wall, we will build upon her a ſilver palace: and if ſhe be a door, we will keep her in with boards of cedar.

10 I am a wall, and my breaſts *are* as towers: then was I in his eyes as one that findeth peace.

11 Salomon had a vine in Baal-hamon: he gave the vineyard unto keepers: every one bringeth for the fruit thereof a thouſand *pieces* of ſilver.

12 *But* my vineyard which is mine, *is* before me. to thee, O Salomon, *appertaineth* a thouſand *pieces of ſilver*, and two hundred to them that keep the fruit thereof.

13 O thou that dwelleſt in the gardens, the companions hearken unto thy voice: cauſe me to hear it.

14 Oh my welbeloved, flee away, and be like unto the roe, or to the young Hart upon the mountaines of ſpices.

The Reſolution.

THus farre the preparation of the ſecond calling, the calling it ſelf followeth, declared by the wonderfull deſire of the called, verſ. 1. 2. *By the mutuall love of the Bridegroome,* verſ. 3. *and his everlaſting continuance,* verſ. 4. *And ſuch is the Princeſſe the younger ſiſter. The other inferiours which accompany this princeſſe are two: one is deſcribed coming out of the deſert, leaning upon her beloved, and with wonderfull zeal,* verſ. 5. 6. 7. *the other is remembred by the great affection of the Siſters,* verſ. 8. 9. *and by her own readineſſe,* verſ. 10. *And hitherto of the Churches ſeverally. Iointly, it ſheweth as well, how carefully the Bridegroom will defend the whole,* verſ. 11. 12. *and what he requireth of the whole,* verſ. 13. *as what the common deſire of the ſponſe ſhall be, namely, that her beloved would fly hence, and that ſhe at length might be carried with him into everlaſting habitacles,* verſ. 14.

THE EXPOSITION.

Verſ. 1. *O that thou wert as my brother that ſucked the breaſts of my mother, when I ſhould finde thee without, I would kiſſe thee, yet I ſhould not be deſpiſed.*

EVery thing now at length fully perfected, and all the faithfull Jewes fitted into one body of Chriſt, their affection is wonderfull, made clear by the *Antitheſis* of the former Jewes, with whom Chriſt in times paſt had to do in the earth, that with wondrous skil with one and the ſame labour, he ſetteth forth aſwell the accurſed hatred of theſe, as the willing and ready love of thoſe new citizens. The old Jewes deſpiſed and refuſed Chriſt coming in the fleſh, and ſhewing himſelf a brother: but there ſhall be nothing better to thoſe, nothing that they ſhall more deſire, then that they may enjoy the favour of his preſence, whereby that horrible wickedneſſe of deſpiſing the Son of God by their elders, may be recompenced by their faith and diligence in holy duties: the old Jewes ſought only his death, but fled and followed him not (teaching in the ſtreets) with kiſſes, but reproaches. All familiarity with him was accounted for a reproach and blame; *Nicodemus* conſtrained for fear to ſeeke private conference with him by night. Theſe ſhall diligently ſeeke him whereſoever he ſhould be, and finding him ſhall worſhip him with great reverence. Neither ſhall they any whit regard the mocks and ſkoffes of the wicked: the world ſhall then be of another faſhion. Theſe later people altogether unlike to thoſe their wicked elders; *Salomon* hath moſt divinely compriſed in theſe words, aſwell the wickedneſſe of thoſe former in refuſing Chriſt, as the pietie of thoſe later in imbracing him.

Verſ 2. *I would lead thee, I would bring thee into my mothers houſe, thou ſhouldeſt inſtruct me: I would cauſe thee to drinke of ſpiced wine, of the fruit of my Pomegranates.*

He followeth the former *Antitheſis* or oppoſition, for he could not better expreſſe the integrity of thoſe which are to be called, then by oppoſing them to ſuch as were formerly called in vain. The old Jewes then ſhut Chriſt out a dores, and deſired to drive him out of the Temple and Synagogues: For they which raged ſo much againſt others which confeſſed him ſomewhat more freely; what would they not do to him himſelf, for whoſe cauſe they were ſo violent againſt others? (*Ioh.* 9. 22.) But theſe people will not only open the gates that the King of glory may come in, but will lead him through the ſtreets, and ſet him higheſt in the midſt of their aſſemblies. The ſame manner of ſpeech we met with before, *Chap.* 3, 4. which we interpreted of his coming in the fleſh; otherwiſe his mothers houſe is the Church, as we ſaw in the firſt *Chap. verſ.* 17. *Thou ſhouldeſt teach me. Tremelius* referreth it, *to my mother which teacheth me.* The words beare it: but the *Antitheſis* requireth ſuch expoſition as I have made. The Jewes very much frequented the Temple, they boaſted themſelves to be the white ſonnes of their mother the Church, but of the doctrine of their brother (the man Chriſt) there will be great difference between the old and theſe. They could not abide to heare Chriſt preaching: theſe will hearken to his voice only, they will draw their doctrine from this only Well, they will preferre themſelves no other manner of life and ſalvation but him alone. Laſtly, whereas ſhe will give him *ſpiced wine to drinke*, thereby he teacheth how far the new people ſhall differ from the old in cruelty: *They mingled him vineger and gall to drinke*, *Mat.* 27, 34. Theſe ſhall tremble at ſuch barbarous wickedneſſe, and in ſtead of that moſt bitter cup ſhall invite him to moſt generous wine of chaſt and fervent piety. Their excellent forme and beauty could not be better painted out, then by the oppoſite deformity of that old and degenerate *Synagogue*: the fruit of the Pomegranate may be referred to ſome principall men among the *Iewes*, who ſhall apply all their authority to advance religion, &c.

Verſ. 3. *His left hand ſhould be under my head, and his right hand ſhould imbrace me.*

The love of the Bridegroome which reſteth moſt pleaſantly in the boſome and imbracing of the Church thus ſettled: hee

ſhall

shall carry the Bride in his armes; and shall keep her safe and sound from all troubles, as before, *Chap.*2.6. but that the Church was never before so well adorned and protected by the divine power, as in this last renovation, according to that of *Ieremy*, *Chap.*16. *vers.*14.15. and of *Esay*, *Chap.*43. *vers.*5, 6. The exceeding glory of Gods presence, shall then obscure all former memory, how famous or renowned soever.

Vers.4. *I charge yee, O daughters of Ierusalem, that yee stir not up, nor awake my love until he please.*

This betokeneth the perpetuity of this love and condition, as before by the same kinde of oath, he alwaies declareth a settled estate of the Church for some long continuance; here are no *Harts* and *Roes* of the field to disturb the peace of the Church, as when she living among enemies, had neer her by Gods just judgement) revengers of their revolting; but now the Kingdome shall be yeelded to Christ, for this is the time wherein *the stone cut out without hands, &c. Dan.*2.34.44.45. *and* 7.27. For in this Kingdome all enemies shall be far removed, or rather taken away altogether; so that the Church shall for ever hereafter live free from feare of them. Then all things shall attaine their own ends, and that whole Mystery (*Revel.*10.7. *and* 16.17. It is finished) which was foretold by the Prophets, for hitherto belongeth their sacred Oracles. Neither doe they further mention any notable change, till our Lord shall come from heaven. For this is that fulnesse, then which nothing can be farther expected on earth, which seemeth to be manifested by this removing of all causes of disturbing the Bridegroome hereafter. Let us then leave the Christian Church of the *Iewes* most flourishing, till Christ Translate his, hence into heaven.

Vers.5. *Who is this that commeth up from the Wildernesse, leaning upon her beloved? I raised thee up under the Appletree, there thy mother brought thee forth, there she brought thee forth that bare thee.*

Hitherto hath beene spoken of the first younger daughter. Another sister followeth: for by this kinde of inquirie we have twice seene a new arising of some Church to be shewed. And of this is a double state declared, the beginning in this verse, the progresse in the 6. and 7. The name of this Nation which commeth up from the wilderneſse (me seemeth) may easily be supposed out of other places of the Prophets. As *Esay* chap.19.23. &c. wherein he treateth of the calling of the *Assyrians* and the *Egyptians*: for though many of either Nation were in former times indued with the saving knowledge of Christ, yet that small number was nothing to this great assembly now spoken of. Hither belongeth that of *Ezek.*47.1,2. and *Ioel* cap.3.18. See *Numb.*25.1. *Zachary* extendeth the limits of this kingdome from sea to sea, *cap.* 9.10. *and from the flood to the end of the earth, for the pride of Assyria, &c. Zach.*10.11. Wherefore this Church shall be that whole bordering Eastern Region, *Arabia*, *Chaldea*, *Babylonia*, *Assyria*, and *Persia*, and those inmost corners of the East. *The waters flowing into these Regions*, is the course of the Gospell wherewith they shall be watered; *leaning upon her beloved*, sheweth her great familiarity with him, as lovers are wont to cast themselves into the bosomes of their beloved, and whereas she was *raised up under an apple tree*, we learned before, that the Apple tree betokeneth inferiour Magistrates, under whose shadow the Bridegroome covereth his Church, as under Tamarisk and lower trees: the high and loftie Cedars being cut downe, *Chap.*2.3.4. Wherefore the first infancie of this Church, seemeth to be governed by some inferiour Officer, who though in the beginning there wanted the chiefe Princes authority, yet by his labour and diligence, he shall bring it to passe, that the seede of the truth sowen shall spring up into the light, that men may behold it: yet it seemeth more likely that this Magistrate should be given them of the Jewes; to whose rule the bordering Regions shall obey. And therefore this Church is raised up under an Apple tree, because it shall be ruled by such Government.

Vers.6. *Set me as a seale upon thine heart, as a Seale upon thine arme, for love is strong as death, jealousie as cruel as the grave, the coales thereof are coales of fire, which hath a most vehement flame.*

Such was the beginning. The progresse shall be famous for her marvellous and earnest desire of piety, which is most elegantly painted out in her desire, and the reason thereof. Her desire is, that she may be as a seale on his heart and arme, as a note Printed with a seale, whereby the impression of it might be aswell deepely fixed inwardly in the minde, as appeare alwaies outwardly to the sight, wherein she desireth that she may cleave to him, as the figure is wont which the Print of the Seale hath made. Most vehement love requires the like againe. The ardent desire of love is expresst by most fit similitudes, for saying it is as strong as death, she sheweth thereby that none can resist the power thereof, death overcommeth the proudest ones by force, so that it should be folly to contend with her. The grave is also cruell without pitty, discourteous and inexorable, who despiseth all supplications, nor is ever filled with prey: it daily devoureth an infinite multitude, and yet alwaies gapeth for new spoiles. Neither is jealousie lesse insatiable.

Vers.7. *Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drowne it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned.*

Therefore this love shall be eternall, which neither adversity, nor prosperity, shall be able to weaken, or any whit impaire: for the chiefe scope hereof is to teach us, that the light of the truth once kindled, shall never be quenched againe in these countries, whereby it manifestly appeareth that here is something expected to be done, and not to shew any thing past. Some knowledge of Christ hath over-spread the Easterne Countries many ages since, but the floods have overwhelmed it; and the wealth and riches of the world have altogether choaked it; for not the least part of true religion hath there beene seene by many ages. But at the length by Gods mercy the truth shall plant her rootes in these lands, which no storm or tempest shal pull up, nor faire allurements shall cause it to wither.

Vers.8. *We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for?*

He commeth now to the calling of a new Nation, we said was another of the younger sisters. Our Divines suppose these to be the words of the old Church, and her wishes to us Gentiles. But we have seen this Prophesie many yeares agoe, carried beyond the age of that old Church, and now exercised in the farthest borders of our earthly habitation. *Esay* seemeth to teach (*chap.*19.18.23. *&c.*) who this people may be in the latter times approaching; he joyneth three nations in a common profession of the truth. The *Assyrians*, *Iewes*, and *Egyptians*. Of the *Iewes* and *Assyrians*, hath the *Paranymph* spoken before, and seemes to have reserved the *Egyptians*, for the last; which nation verily imbraced Christ many ages since, and was in times past very famous in Churches much frequented, yet without doubt, the former times are not here respected, but times yet to come, as the course of things sufficiently sheweth. It is very likely that their owne proper places were certainly given to each one in this song. Neither can it be that such carefull order should faile now at the last. *Esay* expresly coupleth *Assyria* and *Egypt* in the society of one Religion: which never hapned in times past, when *Egypt* flourished with true piety: whereunto *Assyria* was then altogether a stranger. This is especially to be noted, that she calleth Egypt a little sister, exceeded by *Assyria* onely in the latter times, which was but a barren and thirsty land whilst *Egypt* abounded with full

channels. But at length *Aſſyria* ſhall be overflown by a ſwift ſtream iſſuing from the Temple, to whoſe Rivers the *Egyptian Nilus* will be a very ſmall fountain. But *Ioel* ſaith, *cap.* 3.19. *Egypt* ſhall be deſolate: and *Zachary*, *cap.* 10. 11. ſaith, her Scepter ſhall be removed. It is very likely that all *Mahumetans* ſhall be deſtroyed there, before thoſe places ſhal obtain the Kingdom of Chriſt: but this blotting out of the wicked doth not ſignifie an utter deſtruction, but a laying the way open to better inhabitants, yeelding their power and authority to Chriſt his government. *Eſay* mentioneth the foregoing calamity, and forthwith their following happines, whilſt he giveth the knowledge of the language of *Canaan* to five Cities, *cap.* 19. 17. He ſheweth why it is called a little one, by bounding that Church in ſo few cities.

Verſ. 9. *If ſhe be a wall, we will build upon her a palace of ſilver, and if ſhe be a dore, we will encloſe her with boards of Cedar.*

A wall before, Chap. 5. verſ. 7. was the ſafegard of the Civill Magiſtrate: and they which executed that office were called keepers of the wall: compare it with chap. 6. 9 it ſeems here to ſignifie the ſame. As if ſhe ſhould ſay, If the Civill governours will yeeld their helping hand to build up and defend the Egyptian Church, they ſhall not want our ready aid, that they may do that with the more dignity. The gates in the Wall are the Miniſters themſelves, which make an entrance for others into the Church. As the new *Ieruſalem*, all cloſed with walls, hath *twelve Gates, inſcribed with the names of the twelve Apoſtles*, Reve. 21. 12. This is then the meaning thereof. If ſhe ſhall be naked, and without authority of the Magiſtrate, ſo that ſhe muſt be gathered and preſerved by the only truſt and induſtry of the Miniſters; Then will we every where fence theſe gates with *Cedar boards*, ſo that they may be fitted againſt force, not feeling any worm-eaten old age. For then ſhall the Church flouriſh with ſuch Authority, that ſhe ſhall not onely help her ſelf, but alſo her far remote Citizens.

Verſ. 10. *I am a wall, and my breaſts like towers, then was I in his eyes as one that found peace.*

The conſultation and decree of the ſiſters hath diſcovered the beginning of this Church. She ſheweth the proceeding in own words. For anſwering their carefulnes, ſhe ſheweth her ſelf furniſhed with thoſe ornaments which they were afraid ſhe wanted. Verely, not altogether deſtitute of the civill power, but ſome-what fenced with the aid thereof as with a wall and Bulwark. Alſo her Breaſt from whom milk is drawn for the Children, though in the beginning they were ſo ſmall, that they ſeemed altogether none, yet how they were grown to that largenes that they might be worthily compared with *Towers*. This peace which ſhe ſpeaketh of is that Marriage (as it ſeemeth) which her ſiſters before pointed at, and is elſwhere called Reſt, *Ruth* 3.1. As if ſhe ſhould ſay: after that my breaſts waxed ripe or imboſſed, I found that pleaſure in Chriſt, which Maids are wont to enjoy in Marriage.

Verſ. 11. *Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-hamon, he let out the vineyard unto keepers: every one for the fruit thereof was to bring a thouſand pieces of ſilver.*

Verſ. 12. *My vineyard which is mine is before me: thou (O Solomon) muſt have a thouſand, and thoſe that keep the fruit thereof two hundred.*

Hitherto of the new Chriſtian Church, as it was diſtinguiſhed into divers members, into the elder, and the three younger ſiſters, whereof the firſt is a Princeſs among the reſt. Now followeth that which is common aſwell on the behalf of the Bridegroom, as of the Bride: that of the Bridegroom is twofold. *A care, and a Precept.* The care of the Bridegroom towards the Univerſall Church is excellently declared by a diſſimilitude taken from *Solomon*: *Solomon* let out his Vineyard to others, and received a large yearly revenue from his Farmers: But I (ſaith the Bridegroom) *will take care of my vineyard my ſelf. I will not hire it forth.* And the fruit which I ſhall receive, will be far larger then *Solomons*. Much good do it him with his profits, I do not envy him. Yet are they not to be compared with mine. Neither is it a new thing for Kings to hire out to others that which exceedeth their houſhold ſtore. *Mercerus* interpreteth the twelfth verſe as ſpoken of the Bride her ſelf, like as in the firſt Chapter and the ſixth verſe ſhe ſaith, *She was made a keeper of the vines*, and ſo ſhe might be now again, except perhaps for ill lucks ſake, then the Bridegroom himſelf will hereafter undertake this care (See *Eſay* 65. 22, 23. *&c.*) leſt the peace of the Church ſhould afterward be diſturbed by ſome ſuch like negligence.

Verſ. 13. *O Thou that dwelleſt in the Gardens, the Companions hearken to thy voice: cauſe me to heare it.*

This precept teacheth to what imploiment the Bride would give her ſelf for ever: They being ſubdued which durſt to mutter againſt her, and all things ſetled in moſt calm peace. We have often told you that the precepts of this Song are propheſies of common affaires. The bride is ſaid to dwell in the Gardens after the ſame manner as before, Chap. 4.12. when by *Conſtantines* Authority ſhe was fenced by the ſafegard of the Civill Law, but in thoſe laſt times the Magiſtrates over all, eſpecially in the new collected Congregations, ſhall bend all their force to defend the Church; herein only this ſhall differ from that, becauſe the firſt garden was cloſed with one wall, their whole affaires adminiſtred by one mans rule, this new Garden (as alſo that reſtored, Chap. 6. 1.) ſhall be divided with many incloſures, for the variety of Preſidents which ſhall govern in ſeverall provinces. As concerning the Precept. The companions that hearken, are all the Citizens of the Church, for then the Church bringeth it to paſſe that the Bridegroom may hear her fellows, that is, her citizens and particular Congregations, when ſhe ſincerely delivereth the right way to beleeve in Chriſt, and to worſhip God, ſo that from her moſt wholeſome inſtructions, ſins may be acknowledged, mercy implored, goodneſſe preached, and God in the end may receive his due honour. This is that voice of the Companions, wherewith the Bridegroom ſhall be delighted, which from that time ſhall ſound in the Church for ever, and which voice the Citizens learn to pronounce, liſtning to the doctrine and inſtruction of the Church their Mother.

Verſ. 14. *Make haſt, or fly hence my beloved, and be thou like to a Roe, or to a young Hart upon the mountains of Spices.*

It is the common deſire in the Brides behalf, which is delivered in this verſe, for the Univerſall Church breaketh forth into theſe words, that the Bridegroom ſhould fly away into *the mountains of Spices*. What? is ſhe now weary of his preſence, whom with ſuch labour, ſhe before ſought being abſent, that ſhe ſhould ſo ſoon command him out of her ſight? No, but when the *Spouſe* earneſtly deſireth that her beloved would *fly out of the garden into the mountains of Spices*: it is as if ſhe ſhould deſire, that leaving the earth he would return againe to the heavenly fortreſſe: for that mean the *Mountains of Spices*. Not that ſhe wiſheth (being alone and deprived of his imbracings) any longer to ſtick in the filty dregs of this world: but that ſhe earneſtly deſireth to fly hence her ſelf, together with her beloved, & to come to the inheritance laid up for the Elect in heaven. For ſhe (one of the Siſters which even now deſired that ſhe might be fixed to his heart, as a *Seal*, could not endure this divorce, to tarry here behinde him. This is all one with that of Saint *Iohn*, *Rev.* 22. 20. *Come Lord Ieſus*; differing a little in words. *Iohn* requireth that the Bridegroom would ſhew himſelf to the world in the moſt glorious manifeſtation of his Majeſty, which is now covered from the eyes of the world at the right hand of the Father, and ſo at length would put an end to all things. The *Spouſe* deſireth that this Beam, how bright ſoever, which ſhall then ſhine in the earth, would as it were collect his light, and withdraw it ſelf into heaven. Either of them wiſheth the end, but

but he defineth it by comming from Heaven: she by departing from the earth. Either of which we expect, comming first, the departure after. Hitherto goeth this divine Poeme, but pointeth not out the last moment of time. It is sufficient that it setteth forth the condition of the last Church more distinctly and exactly, I suppose, then any other part of the Scripture. Many large and pleasant Propheſies do aime at the calling of the Jewes, but here almost all set up their mark: but of the other Sisters coming to the truth by her help, they make a more obscure and generall mention, yet out of this interpretation it may be understood how fast they are, who set down the end of ſ world at a certain year out of some limited number in the Scriptures, especially if they compare this propheſie with the *Revelation* and *Daniel*. For that Resurrection, *Dan.*12. and *Rev.*20.12. Also that *It is done*, of the seventh Viall, *Reve.*16.17. appertaineth to the calling of the Jews: So that where we expect the end of the world, there we find ſ beginning of a new Church, which is not like to be for a day or a week or a short time. The Angel expreſly affirmeth to be far & wide spread, *Rev.*20.5.6. And giveth it a thousand years after the first Resurrection of the elder sister. Now seing the Church of the Jews shal begin to flouriſh about 400. years after that Returrection, 600. years at least shall be left wherein she shall raign here upon the earth: but how long after, he only knoweth, who knoweth all things. I can light upon no mark or token of time that may give even the least conjecture; *Daniel* saith, after the destruction of the Turkiſh Empire, (which shall be destroyed by Conversion of the Jewes) a space shall be given for the rest of the Beasts to live, *even for a time, and a time appointed*. But this space is neither expreſſed, neither perhaps shall the end of the World be joyned with the destruction of the remnant. That therefore which hath troubled many, as if that certain limiting of time which offereth it self in the Revelation and elsewhere, should be [illegible] us to the end of all (repreſſing or mollifying the words of Christ, *Mar.*13.32. by interpretation) may hence be delivered from this fear, for all those accounts end, either in the Jews Conversion, or if they go a little farther (whereof I find only two, which I have spoken of before) they rather shew within what time the end shall not be, then at what moment it is to be expected. Wherefore that of Christ remaineth without doubt, in the same meaning as the words do properly shew: *The Angels themselves know not the very* last day. We verily shew this day by faith, and have many tokens of its drawing neer, but I suppose we fail of any account that may bring us to any neer knowledge thereof. If any think I have opened a window to security by removing the bounds of it far off: let him know if the shortnes of this life and the uncertain move him not, neither will the neernes of the move any whit at all. What matter makes it whether C[illegible] himself come to judgement in the sight of all men, thou be drawn to judgement at his Tribunall Seat? or ought est thou not to be carefull of thine own end, unleſſe the end of the whole world do accompany it? *Let the wicked be filthy ſtill*, yet this thought will easily shake off the security from the godly, though this revealed truth may not a little bridle the tongues of the wicked, which draw all things into doubt whiles they read of fixed terms in some mens works, and by use learn them, to be deceived by conjecture. As if the errour of blind man (and such verily are the sharpeſt sighted in Divine Matters) should be a sufficient Argument to subvert the truth of God. We may be deceived in obscure things, and not plainly delivered to us of purpose, yet the Divine Truth doth neither deceive, nor is deceived, as they too late shall finde, which have despiſed it. But let this be an [illegible] of this plain expoſition.

A Prayer.

EXceeding praiſe be to thee O mercifull Father, together with the Sonne and holy Ghoſt, which hast so much reſpected our infirmity, that thou hast vouchsafed to inform us of things to come even to the last end. Whereby, and by the use of times past we may be confirmed in thy truth, and not run headlong into unforeseen miſchiefes in the knowledge of things to come. Let not this knowledge vaniſh without fruit I beſeech thee, but beſtow the comfort thereof upon thy Church; that she looking into the glory of thy Children may deſpiſe all the troubles and deceitfull delights of this, and may constantly proceed to that mark for which the Crown is laid up in Christ Jeſus. To whom with thee O Father, and with the holy Spirit, be all honour, praiſe and glory, for ever and ever, Amen.

The Popes Spectacles, or his Climactericall year, calculated *in Auguſt, Anno* 1623.

BRieſe Notes out of ſeverall Expoſitors of the *Revelation*, touching the riſing and fall, progreſſe, and finall deſtruction of the Enemies of the Church: with ſome other obſervances out of divers writers.

St. *Iohn* wrote his *Revelation* and ſent it to the ſeven Churches in *Aſia minor*, now called *Natolia*. He wrote it *Anno* 97. as *Euſebius* ſaith: in 99. as *Irenæus* ſaith. He dyed under *Trajan*, 109. as moſt ſay; But *Ieromes Nicephorus* ſay in 100.

His Propheſie is of things to come, and not of things paſt. well obſerved by Maſter *Brightman*.

To be obſerved, for the better underſtanding of this Propheſie, what names and Titles the *Revelation* giveth to the Adverſaries of the Church, which are as followeth.

The firſt and laſt adverſaries are called a dragon; an open and profeſſe enemy to Chriſtianity, which were the Heathen Emperors, and now the Turkes, as the beſt expoſitors underſtand it.

The ſecond and third after the Dragon are two beaſts, the firſt out of the Sea, the ſecond out of the earth.

The fourth is called a Whore and *Babylon*, *chap.* 17.1. and 18. Alſo that Whore is called the great City, &c. which in Saint *Iohns* time was onely *Rome*.

The Dragon, the firſt Adverſary, was deſtroyed by *Conſtantine* the great, in overthrowing *Diocleſian*, *Maxentius* and *Maximinian*, *Anno*. 312. he began his reign *An.* 306. or 307.

After the overthrow of the Dragon, a Beaſt ariſeth preſently out of the Sea: which *Brightman* expounds erroneous doctrine, ſo likewiſe hath he, Eccleſiaſticall Government. And in *Conſtantines* time *Rome* was called the firſt Sea, *Conſtantinople* the ſecond, *Alexandria* the third, *Antioch* the fourth and *Ieruſalem* the fifth. And ſo the *Romaniſts* at this day ſtyle the Popes juriſdiction.

The other beaſt riſeth out of the Earth, which is the Popes ſpirituall and Temporall power, or rather his dear friends the Antichriſtian Emperours; becauſe it is ſaid, verſe 11. that this beaſt cauſeth all that dwell in the earth to worſhip the firſt Beaſt, which is the Pope; for they were his firſt builders and are his chief pillars, &c.

He is, likewiſe called the Beaſt which was, and is not, *chap.* 17.11. by which is meant the *Romane* Empire, in the Weſt, which lay void three hundred twenty five years, from *Auguſtulus*, to *Carolus Magnus*.

Alſo, the beaſt was taken, and with him that falſe Prophet which wrought miracles, &c. *Chap.* 19. 20. which ſeem to make them to be two diſtinct perſons.

Thus alſo is *Rome* plainly deſcribed to be ſet on ſeven hils, and ruling over the Kings of the earth: which make *Bellarmine* and *Rebera* both *Ieſuits*, to confeſſe, that *Rome* is the Whore there meant. *Rome* alſo maintains Idolatry and Superſtition in her Religion, Government, and Pollicy; which in Scripture is called Whoredome: then the Pope is not the Whore, but one of the Beaſts or Bawds rather (if you will) to the Whore. For example; he maintains, Stews in *Rome*, yeelding him yearly 40000. Duckets, and receiveth yearly of Curtiſans 50000. Duckets, and granteth diſpenſations to the Cardinals to uſe *Sodometry* in the three hot moneths of the year. I would know of any Jeſuite whether the Pope can pardon a ſin before it be commited, &c. As he did *Henry* the 8. to marry his brothers wife: the King of *Spaine* his Neece: the Arch dutches, *Albertus*, whom ſhe might call, Father, Uncle, and Cozen. And ſo I leave it to the indifferent to judge, whether he be the Whore, the Beaſt, or the

Whore is ſaid to ſit upon a Beaſt, *Revel.* 17. the Pope is this whores only ſtay and prop, (*quis neſcit?*) And ſo *Iunius Napier*, and *Brightman* take it: but *Downam* thinks it is meant of the Germane Emperours, whoſe puniſhment and deſtruction is deſcribed, *chap.* 17. *and* 18. *verſ.* 3. *and* 4.

In the thirteenth chapter it is ſaid that the firſt beaſt is wounded and healed by a Dragon, before the ariſing of the ſecond Beaſt; which Dragon ſome ſay was *Athaulphus* that wounded *Honorius* the Emperour, *Anno* 414. Others ſay *Odoacer*, who overthrew *Auguſtulus* the laſt Romane *Cæſar*. Another (viz. D. *Forbes*, *now a Biſhop in Scotland*) ſaith it was, *Theodoricus* the *Oſtrogoth*, An 476. Others *Alaricus a Goth* that ſackt *Rome*, Anno 541. Theſe were all heathen Kings; and therefore accounted among the Dragons, whereof one healed the firſt Beaſt, viz the *Pope*. Quere.

After this *Rome* was under the Exarches of *Ravenna* 197. years, which were Chriſtians; then under the *Lombards* 56. years, which at firſt were heathen, and after *Arrians*, and had but a part of the Empire.

In this time the *Viſigothes* ruled in Spaine, the *Alems* in *Guines* and *Gaſcoine*, the French men in the reſidue of France, the *Vandalls in Africk*, the *Saxons in Britain*, the *Oſtrogoths* in *Miſe* and *Hungarie*, the *Herules and Turinges* in *Italy* and *Rome*. Only the name of the Empire remained with *Zeno* in the Eaſt. *Tranſamundus* King of the *Vandalls* in *Africke* baniſhed 220. Biſhops An. 459. About the time was great alteration of States and Kingdoms; *Carolus Magnus* overthrowing the *Goths and Vandalls* with *Alaricus* and the *Lumbards*, was by Pope *Honorius* made Emperour of the Weſt, An. 802. (*Melancthon and Lanquet*)

So from *Auguſtulus* to *Carolus Magnus* the Empire was void, 325. years, wherein ſaith *Eraſmus*, *Antichriſt* was to ariſe. *Downam*, *Napier*, *and Brightman*, ſay he roſe when *Conſtantine* removed the Empire (out of the way) to *Conſtantinople*; It is true, then the whore conceived the monſter, but ſhe bore him in her wombe 35. years before ſhe brought him forth in the ſight of the world, 2 Theſſ. 2.

He that withheld was taken away by *Conſtantine*, (311) when he overthrew *Diocleſian*, *Maxentius*, *and Maximinian* the laſt of thoſe Dragons: neither is he there ſaid preſently to appear, or be born into the world, *chap.* 13. 11. *and* 12.

The ſecond Beaſt after his riſing, cauſeth the earth and them that dwell therein to worſhip the firſt Beaſt, whoſe deadly wound was healed. Theſe were the Emperours: as *Phocus*, who gave the firſt title of univerſall-Biſhop to *Boniface* the third. *Bale* ſaith, he was a Britain firſt named *Wenefridus*, Anno 606. *Pepin* and *Charles* the great, who gave great revenews to *Leo* the third. But theſe were of the Race of the ſecond Beaſt, and not of the Dragon. About 100. years after the death of *Charles*, the Roman Empire came to *Otho* the firſt German Emperour, An. 936. the Electors of the Empire were ordained by Pope *Gregory* the ſeventeenth, and *Otho* the third.

Neither were *Boniface* or *Leo* the firſt Beaſt as ſome take it, for the two Beaſts were bred and born long before, as hereafter will plainly appear.

Thus much ſhall ſuffice to diſtinguiſh between the Dragon, the Beaſt, the falſe prophet, and the whore, *Rev.* 20. 2.

The Dragon called alſo the devill and Satan is bound for 1000. yeares: his firſt binding by *Conſtantine* continued untill *Zadok* the firſt Emperour of the Turkes: which was 1310. This dragon began to breed, Anno 1051. but was not of full growth untill *Otho* the firſt Emperour, Anno 1300. Then the Dragon and Satan compaſſed the tents of the Saints and the beloved city, *Rome*, who were the Chriſtians. In this time the Chriſtians recovered *again Ieruſalem*, and held it 92. years, *Chap.* 11. 3.

The